

MAY 5, 2008

The American Conservative

FREEDOMLAND

Make-Believe in Mesopotamia

THE ZBIG PICTURE

Philip Weiss

AEI'S MAN IN IRAN

Philip Giraldi

BAILING OUT FAMILIES

Allan C. Carlson



BACK TO BERLIN

It was a delight for me to read William Lind's essay, "What Would Bismarck Do?" (March 24). Not only does Lind know history well, he also shows an excellent feel for the political realities of the Balkans. I cheered the U.S. intervention in Bosnia to put an end to Serbian brutalities and mayhem, and I also approved of the American air war to further the cause of the Kosovars. I realize now that the latter was a mistake: we not only killed many civilians, we also set a dangerous precedent for intervention in other nations' affairs.

Mindful of the emotional importance of Kosovo for the Serbs, Lind proposes an imaginative solution. Give the Kosovars as much independence as possible, but let the Serbs keep their sacred historical places and provide them with some compensation for lost territory. Another Berlin Conference 131 years after the first may bring peace to the Balkans and improve East-West relations. I think success is possible, even without Bismarck.

HANS COLL
Rochester, N.Y.

HARVARD FOR DUMMIES

As a Harvard Ph.D. and a current professor at a state university, I must say that my own experience is not in accord with Fred Reed's account of the Harvard student body (April 7). Had I applied the same standards at Harvard that I apply at the University of Wisconsin, few of my students would have received a grade higher than C. When I worked as a teaching assistant at Harvard, I regularly encountered students whose native language was English but who could not form a coherent sentence. A colleague worked as a teaching assistant in a course on Alexander the Great in which not one student could find Greece on the map. When asked to describe the scene on a Greek vase, a native English speaker wrote, "he drew his sword weapon from his upholster while the other soldiers conjugated near the ledge." Such howlers were not rare.

As a liberal educator, I expect to disagree with your magazine's commentary on affirmative action, standardized testing, and related issues, yet I have renewed my charter subscription in part because I, like many academics, am disturbed by the relaxation of scholarly rigor that has taken place in the name of multiculturalism. Your magazine has sometimes intrigued if not persuaded me with arguments that we need to return to an old-fashioned canonical curriculum and adopt an objective, fact-based criterion such as the IQ test to assist the best and the brightest in their rightful journey to elite places in society.

The statistics cited by Reed, however, when weighed against my own experience, leave me convinced that IQ tests are simply another form of cultural dumbing down. IQ scores apparently lead us to infer that the average Harvard student is a genius, but everyone who has taught at Harvard knows that many of these geniuses often cannot form complete sentences, are ignorant of the most basic historical and geographic facts, and are graded more leniently than students at the average state school. The sciences may be, as Reed states, "the basis of America's position in the world," but what is the value of a scientist who cannot read a map?

CHRISTOPHER LIVANOS
Via e-mail

HOPE FOR McCain

Bravo to Prof. Andrew J. Bacevich for arguing the conservative merits of Barack Obama's possible presidency ("The Right Choice?" March 24). I agreed with the entire piece except the next-to-last sentence that stated John McCain represents no hope at all.

Ideologically, McCain is pretty much an empty vessel. Adding in his Vietnam service, voters sense that McCain will act honorably and heroically as commander in chief. (Intelligently is another matter.) This partly explains the Arizona senator's current lead over Obama and Clinton in public-opinion polls.

Placing McCain's record and longevity alongside an Obama résumé that shows inexperience and shady relationships with anti-Americanism and Islam—the Illinois senator can thank his wife and pastor for that—makes McCain attractive to Middle America. Conservatives would do well not to overlook this.

As well documented by Bacevich, McCain's one ideological fixation is neo-conservative militarism. True, it's a major liability. Yet who would be in a better position to peaceably bring our troops home from Iraq with honor and minimal damage to military morale, à la Charles DeGaulle and 1950s Algeria? Like DeGaulle, McCain's allegiance to the Armed Services is beyond question. The same cannot and would not be said of Obama.

JAMES MOSHER
Ledyard, Conn.

MISMEASURE OF MAN

In the April 7 issue, Wayne Merry writes, "A person born in Belgium or Botswana is just as likely to be gifted as one born in America or China..." This is just not the case. We have had almost a hundred years of worldwide intelligence testing now, much of it available in Richard Lynn's monumental *Race Differences in Intelligence: An Evolutionary Analysis*. While the average IQ in the United States among whites is about 100, tests show it may even be a little higher in Belgium and much higher in China (about 106). Unfortunately for Botswana, sub-Saharan African blacks score about 70. Certainly opportunities differ, but so does the raw material.

LOUIS ANDREWS
Via e-mail

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[ELECTION]

DEMOCRATS' DILEMMA

Hillary Clinton's 10-point win in Pennsylvania indisputably demonstrates Obama's weakness as a general election candidate. This is an unpalatable conclusion for many who yearned for an Iraq War opponent of eloquence and conviction to carry the banner of foreign policy realism against John McCain. But unwelcome facts shouldn't be denied.

White working-class voters didn't support Obama, even though he campaigned well in the state and outspent Hillary by huge margins. He lost seven in ten Catholic voters. His electoral base among college students and minorities increasingly resembles the George McGovern coalition that managed to win one state in the 1972 general election. It is unlikely Obama could overcome these political deficits before November.

We could speculate endlessly about whether the voter resistance is based on race, is a more complex and visceral reaction to the Michelle-Jeremiah Wright duo, or is mainly due to some banal factor such as his lack of experience. It nonetheless exists. Obama's frontrunner status is a product of his extraordinary success in caucuses, where young activists play a disproportionate role, and primary wins in solidly Republican states. These hardly constitute the best venues for the Democrats to select their nominee.

Democratic voters and superdelegates have before them an unfortunate choice. On the one hand is Hillary, trying to outdo Joe Lieberman as the I-will-bomb-more-countries Democrat. On the other, the probably unelectable Barack.

[WAR]

THEY ALL LOOK ALIKE

One would imagine that John McCain had learned something from George Bush's mistakes in Iraq. But to read



STILL STANDING

about the Arizonan going around the country talking about the al-Qaeda threat to take over Iraq is to realize that no progress has been made. Al-Qaeda of Mesopotamia is a sliver of the Iraqi insurgency that did not exist before the American invasion. Its social base is a minority of the Sunni minority, and the chances that it could "take the country" if American troops weren't there are akin to those of the University of Chicago basketball team making it to the NCAA final four.

McCain's repeated use of the "al-Qaeda" term means he is confused over the forces in play or is trying to mislead the American people by advancing the fiction of a connection between the 9/11 attacks and the Iraqi insurgents.

McCain's fudging has some surprising supporters. The Brookings Institution's Kenneth Pollack, one of the liberal hawks who was a major cheerleader for the war, is fine with McCain's slippery language: al-Qaeda is a "perfectly usable catchall phrase," and campaigning "does not lend itself to long-winded explanations of what we really are facing."

Why bother Americans with complicated fact-based explanations when misleading code words work so much better? If they knew what "we really are facing" they might not keep pouring blood and treasure into a futile battle against the wrong enemy.

[ALLIES]

ISRAELI DOVES DROP BOMB

American engineer Ben-Ami Kadish, 84, has been charged with four counts of conspiracy for passing defense-related documents to Israeli officials while he worked at the Army's Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center between 1980 and 1985. His alleged case officer, Yosef Yagur, now retired and living in Israeli, was also the point of contact for spy Jonathan Pollard.

Kadish seems to have operated on a much lower plane than Pollard—for his trouble he reportedly received small gifts and restaurant meals. But the case could have major implications.

According to our contributing editor Phil Giraldi, Israeli sources report that the FBI investigation of Kadish was sparked by information from inside the government of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. One source reports that compromising information was obtained through a telephone tap of a call between Yagur and Kadish. The FBI is also investigating a number of U.S. citizens, including an individual who held very senior positions in the Clinton and Bush White Houses.

The timing of the leak could be significant. At closed congressional hearings scheduled for the end of this month, the White House planned to present Israeli intelligence officers to testify about the supposed Syrian nuclear program that was bombed on Sept. 6, 2007. But it is

now unlikely that those officers will allow themselves to be questioned, as they would almost certainly be asked about Israeli spying on the United States.

Vice President Dick Cheney and Olmert apparently intended to use the briefings to intensify pressure on both Syria and Iran. Doves in the Olmert administration may have leaked the information to forestall military confrontation and create space for negotiations, particularly with Syria.

Their revelation also diminishes the odds that President Bush will pardon Pollard before leaving office—a final favor to the neocons.

[FAITH]

PEACE BE WITH YOU

As President Bush prepared to greet Pope Benedict XVI, the *Washington Post* noted the large number of Catholics on the White House staff and ventured, “George W. Bush could well be the nation’s first Catholic president.” Richard John Neuhaus, the editor of *First Things* added, “There is an awareness in the White House that the rich Catholic intellectual tradition is a resource for making the links between Christian faith, religiously grounded moral judgments and public policy.”

Bush did appoint two conservative Catholics to the Supreme Court. He limited federal investment in stem-cell research and, stealing a line from John Paul II, he has talked about building “a culture of life.” But on the defining event of the Bush presidency, the pope has rendered a verdict of his own.

As Cardinal Ratzinger, he told reporters that the Iraq War was “certainly not” just. He added, “the concept of preventive war does not appear in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*.” In recent weeks, the pontiff pleaded emotionally for an end to the conflict, saying, “Enough with the slaughters. Enough with the violence. Enough with the

hatred in Iraq!” During his visit to Ground Zero, he prayed, “God of peace, bring your peace to our violent world: peace in the hearts of all men and women and peace among the nations of the earth.”

Catholics should praise any man of goodwill for linking sound moral judgments to public policy. But before they canonize Bush, they might recall four words: Blessed are the peacemakers.

[CULTURE]

SECT'S CRIME

When the residents of the Yearning for Zion Ranch were dragged blinking into the media glare, they seemed a foreign species—less lost between cultures than transported through time. Had our government emptied an average American suburb of its children, the nation would have been horrified. But we found it difficult to relate to creatures so immune to modern gloss.

Around the world and across history, however, their lifestyle is scarcely unique. Polygamy was practiced—as it has been from Biblical times—but the 416 children were confiscated because authorities suspected marriage of teenage girls. A society unwilling to impose sexual constraints suddenly located a moral compass—and set it down amid the most buttoned-up crowd imaginable.

Much as we invoke privacy in sexual matters, here the dragnet came out. Families were not separately evaluated. Specific cases were not cited. The alleged tipster—a 16-year-old protesting her marriage to a 50-year-old man—was never located.

The investigation is ongoing, and abuse may yet be proved. No young woman should be forced into marriage against her will. But so far the evidence against the sect seems thin. Anyone seeking precedent will unearth countless cases of polygamous and teenage coupling. He'll search in vain for historical accounts of gay marriage. ■

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[potemkin nation]

Freedomland

Petraeus and Crocker pretend Iraq is a state. Everyone goes along.

By William S. Lind

IN THE SECOND WEEK in April, the world's most elaborate kabuki theater, Washington, offered a stunning performance. America's two consuls for Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus and Amb. Ryan C. Crocker, gave Congress and the world their appreciation of the situation in that unhappy country. Senators and congressmen listened with rapt attention. The three presidential candidates, aka the three blind mice, postured and preened in the great men's presence. The press hung on every word. Analysts and columnists parsed their meaning.

As with theater, none of it was real.

Both Crocker and Petraeus spoke of Iraq as if it were a state. Crocker referred to "The passage of the 2008 [Iraqi] budget, with record amounts for capital expenditures, [which] ensures that the federal and provincial governments will have the resources for public spending." He spoke of "the development of Iraq's Council of Representatives as a national institution." He cautioned that "there is still very much to be done to bring full government control to the streets of Basra." In a similar vein, General Petraeus repeatedly referred to Iraqi Security Forces, noting, "An increasingly robust Iraqi-run training base enabled the Iraqi Security Forces to grow by over 3,000 soldiers and police over the past 16 months." He assured Congress, "Iraq's security ministries are steadily improving their ability to execute their budgets."

The members of the Senate and House committees before whom the consuls testified played their parts in turn. They questioned the witnesses carefully, as committee members usually do, within the framework of their statements. No one seems to have inquired whether that framework exists, other than as a beautiful dream.

Beautiful dreams are the stuff of theater, but strategy must be based in the real world.

The defining reality in Iraq is that there is no state. Because there is no state in Iraq, there is also no government. Orders issued in Baghdad have no impact because there are no state institutions to carry them out. Government institutions such as parliament and positions such as cabinet minister have no substance. Power comes from having a relationship with a militia, not a government office. The "Iraqi Security Forces" are groups of Shi'ite militias, which exist to fight other militias. They take orders from militia leaders, not the government. Government revenues are slush funds for militia leaders to pay their militiamen. The whole edifice Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus described exists only as a figment of the Bush administration's imagination.

Couldn't a single member of Congress have found the courage to say, "Excuse me, consul, but you have no clothes"?

Ironically the reality behind the kabuki was revealed even as the show

went on, in the Iraqi city of Basra. There, Iraqi "Prime Minister" Nouri al-Maliki impulsively ordered an offensive by the Iraqi "army" against the Mahdi Army militia of Muqtada al-Sadr. In effect, he tried to act like the head of a real state. Since he isn't, the result was a fiasco. The Iraqi "army" fell apart, as militias usually do when given unwelcome orders. Iraqi "soldiers" and "police" went over or went home, in considerable numbers. Reportedly, the fight ended with the Mahdi Army controlling more of Basra than it did at the beginning. Mr. al-Maliki, desperate for a ceasefire, had to agree in advance to any conditions al-Sadr wanted to impose.

At root, the problem here is one conservatives have traditionally been sensitive to, namely the meaning of words. "Government," "parliament," "army," and "police" only have meaning in the context of a state. Where there is no state, the words have no meaning. Statements such as those given to Congress and the American public by General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker become what logical positivists call pseudo-statements.

In answer to a question before one of the committees, General Petraeus gave a particularly vivid example of how words disconnected from reality can deceive. (In this case the deception is no doubt self-deception.) He said, "We've got to continue. We have our teeth into the jugular, and we need to keep it [*sic*]

there.” In a column in the April 13 *Washington Post*, David Broder wrote, “The general clearly likes that phrase, because he used it twice more during his visit to The Post.”

In Fourth Generation war, non-state opponents, such as those we face in Iraq and Afghanistan, have no jugular. They have no single point of vulnerability an opponent can hit to bring them down. (They may have such critical vulnerabilities internally, but only they can hit them, as al-Qaeda in Iraq seems to have done in alienating its Sunni base.) For outside forces such as ourselves, Fourth Generation war is war of the capillaries. What we have our teeth into in Iraq is a jellyfish.

The card castle of illusions that is built when meaningless words are used becomes a base for poor strategic decisions. That reality, too, revealed itself as the kabuki played on in Washington. The failure of Mr. al-Maliki’s “big push” into Basra presented American forces in Iraq with a problem. To win, we must see a state re-emerge. That means we should stay out of the way of anyone with the potential to re-create a state. Muqtada al-Sadr is at or near the head of that list. The al-Maliki “government” isn’t even on it.

So what did we do? We went to war against al-Sadr on behalf of al-Maliki, of course. Our military leadership cannot grasp one of the most basic facts about Fourth Generation war, namely that the splintering of factions makes it more difficult to generate a state. Should we have the bad luck to destroy the Madhi Army and thereby “win” this fight—which continues with the usual mindless and counterproductive airstrikes on Basra and Sadr City in Baghdad—we will move not toward but farther away from seeing a state re-emerge in Iraq.

Nor will faulty strategy remain confined to Iraq. Faced with the contradiction between the beautiful dream of a new Iraqi state and the reality on the ground, the Bush administration has

turned to an old explanation: the devil is doing it. As Petraeus and Crocker repeatedly told Congress, the devil is Iran.

The violence of Petraeus’s language is at times striking. Speaking of the Shi’ite militias that dared oppose our recent offensive against them—the buzzword for them is Special Groups—Petraeus said “the flame-up also highlighted the destructive role Iran has played in funding, training, arming, and directing the so-called Special Groups. ... Unchecked, the Special Groups pose the greatest long-term threat to the viability of a democratic Iraq.” The wanted posters for Osama bin Laden, it seems, are being pasted over with ones for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Always better to go after someone you can bomb than someone you can’t find.

Petraeus did not just mention Iran once and pass on. The theme of Iran *perfidie* came up again and again:

Iran has fueled the violence [in Iraq] in a particularly damaging way. ... Together with the Iraqi Security Forces, we have also focused on the Special Groups. These elements are funded, trained, armed, and directed by Iran’s Qods Force. ... It was these groups that launched Iranian rockets and mortar rounds at Iraq’s seat of government. ... External actors, like Iran, could stoke violence in Iraq. ... A failed state in Iraq would pose serious consequences ... for the effort to counter malign Iranian influence. ... It is clearly in our national interest ... to help Iraq resist Iranian encroachment on its sovereignty...

Those who have ears, let them hear. If the main reason for the problems in Iraq is Iran, what does the United States need to do? The lead editorial in the *Washington Post* on the Sunday following the consuls’ testimony answered the question: “It nevertheless is inevitable

that Iran’s proxies in Iraq, Gaza, and Lebanon will have to be countered in part by military force...”

And so the illusion of a state in Iraq will have to be buttressed with another war to excise the devil that stands between America and “victory.” The price of war with Iran could well include the army we now have in Iraq.

What should we do? First, we must understand what “winning” in Iraq means. It does not mean that Iraq becomes an American satellite. That remains the goal of the Bush administration and the neocons, but it is not and never was attainable.

Winning in Iraq simply means that a state re-emerges there. The rise of a new state in Iraq means defeat for al-Qaeda and other non-state entities, who are our real enemies. States don’t like competition, and real states do not permit non-state entities to exist on their territory (unless they are actually proxies the state plans to use against other states).

Second, we must accept the now well-proven fact that we cannot re-create a state in Iraq. We have tried for five years and we have nothing to show for it beyond 4,000 dead, tens of thousands wounded, and an empty treasury. The problem is legitimacy. Any state institutions we create or overtly support will not be accepted by the Iraqi people as legitimate. That is generally true of governments created and installed by foreign occupiers. The local response is, “Vichy ptui.”

A new state can only arise in Iraq independently of our efforts and indeed opposed to foreign occupation. We have to get out of the way and let it happen. It may not. There is no guarantee. There is, however, a guarantee that we cannot make it happen, so getting out of the way is the more promising road to victory. Strategy dictates that we come home, not as an acknowledgement of defeat but as a final bid to win.

In the opening phase of the neocon World War IV against Islamofascism, the U.S. invaded Iraq with help from stalwart allies like Ahmad Chalabi, whose efforts materially assisted in the creation of the vibrant democracy currently sheltered in Baghdad's Green Zone. Chalabi was a wheeler-dealer and manipulator, a felon and intelligence fabricator lurking behind an unprepossessing exterior. But at least he was the real thing. As the neocons now move toward war against Iran, they have essentially fabricated a persona to serve as their new Iranian man, a self-described political prisoner and the hope for Iran's future. He is Amir Abbas Fakhrahar, a man with a website and good friends named Richard Perle and Frank Gaffney. Jim Woolsey has described Fakhrahar as a "young hero," while Michael Ledeen calls him a "unifying figure." He arrived in Washington in April 2006, speaking pretty good English, apparently a requirement for would-be nation-builders.

Nearly all the evidence for Fakhrahar's dissidence comes from the Michael Ledeen-linked Student Movement Co-ordination Committee for Democracy in Iran, based in Addison, Texas. He claims to have been imprisoned for his embrace of democracy, but genuine Iranian dissidents say they have never heard of him. He claims to have written three books, but no one can locate a copy of any of them. He and his family give various accounts of his encounters with the Iranian police and prison system. Fakhrahar improbably reports that he was allowed to make international calls to the U.S. while in jail and even made a video featuring himself and his mother. In spite of an alleged "shoot to kill" order on him, he survived being on the run for 10 months in Iran and then proceeded to the airport and caught a commercial flight to Dubai, where Perle was waiting. An obliging American Enterprise Institute quickly set him up as president of the aptly named Iran Enterprise Institute, which shares office space with the neocon Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. Since that auspicious launch, Fakhrahar has been feted at AEI-sponsored lunches with top policymakers, has been to the White House, and has briefed Congress. Of President Bush, he has declared, "all the [Iranian] youngsters support him and love him." He has called for U.S. action to "help or enhance the [Iranian] people to rise up."

Recent efforts to get Fakhrahar a senior position at the Voice of America Persian Service have stalled because the service chief, Sheila Gandji, believes him to be incompetent. A number of neocon blogs have attacked Gandji as a tool of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Congress has also climbed on board the Fakhrahar express. Republican Sen. Tom Coburn has held up the nomination of Tom Glassman as the State Department's undersecretary for public diplomacy because of VOA's alleged anti-American, pro-Iranian bias. Ironically, Glassman is an alumnus of AEI. Coburn has demanded the review of thousands of hours of VOA Farsi transcripts, at enormous expense, threatening to stop approval of Glassman until he is satisfied or until Gandji is fired, whichever comes first.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a fellow at the American Conservative Defense Alliance.

Third, we must face the fact that a real Iraqi state is likely to be close to Iran. The solution is not to bomb Iran but to settle our differences—what diplomats call a rapprochement. Tehran has offered us a general settlement on quite generous terms. We should take them up on it. If the U.S. and Iran are no longer enemies, the fact that a new Iraqi state is allied with Iran is not a problem.

It goes without saying that none of this will happen in the remainder of George W. Bush's term. More likely is an attack on Iran, intended to foreclose on these options. McCain represents the replacement of Commodus with Caligula. Clinton II would probably bring back the same inept foreign policy crowd of Clinton I. Obama? You can write whatever you want on a blank slate, which is the basis of his appeal. The political landscape is a desert, as is usually the case toward the end of a republic. Perhaps the House of Hanover will take us back.

What is certain is that the present course in Iraq traps us in a maze with no exit. According to Broder, General Petraeus suggested to the *Post's* editorial board that we should focus "less on an exit strategy from Iraq and more on an engagement strategy."

Better advice was offered by Hussein Jabar, an Iraqi man on the street interviewed for an article in the April 10 *Washington Post*:

For five years, the Americans have not done anything for the Iraqis. What do they think they can do for us in one more year?

I am so sick and tired of all this. We just want the Americans to go, and we will try to fix things ourselves. ■

William S. Lind is director of the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation in Washington, D.C.

What Would George Bailey Do?

Any plan to right the housing market should put families first.

By Allan C. Carlson

HENRY POTTER: Have you put any real pressure on these people of yours to pay those mortgages?

PETER BAILEY: Times are bad, Mr.

Potter. A lot of these people are out of work.

POTTER: Then foreclose!

BAILEY: I can't do that. These families have children.

POTTER: They're not my children.

BAILEY: But they're somebody's children, Mr. Potter.

POTTER: Are you running a business or a charity ward?

MR. POTTER'S QUESTIONS from the 1946 film "It's a Wonderful Life" now haunt American politics. The contemporary mortgage crisis has destabilized the American and global economies, imperiled great banking enterprises, and threatened hundreds of thousands of American households with the loss of their homes. Washington politicians on both sides of the aisle have in recent weeks essentially answered Mr. Potter's final query, affirming the federal government's role as "charity ward" of last resort, this time for both threatened homeowners and endangered financiers.

Regarding the former, the legislators' actions might be viewed as more than a craven quest for votes. They could be understood as responding to an echo of another quote from "It's a Wonderful Life," this time by Peter Bailey's more famous son, George:

Just remember this, Mr. Potter, that this rabble you're talking about . . . they do most of the working and paying and living and dying in this community. Well, is it too much to have them work and pay and live and die in a couple of decent rooms and a bath?

Our own politicians shout "no!" while approving billions to refinance delinquent loans. (Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve uses public dollars to save Bear Stearns.)

During the 1930s and 1940s, filmland's Bailey Building and Loan had built lovely suburban homes for struggling families and had weathered several financial crises, albeit always through private rather than public means. How would George Bailey, the fictional saint of the mortgage industry, view the current crisis and federal response? Put another way: What would George Bailey do?

Some real history may help here. The classic Savings and Loan association portrayed in the film grew out of the "friendly society" tradition of 19th-century America. Often associated with ethnic groups—two of my great-grandfathers were founders of the Skandia Society serving Swedish immigrants in Des Moines, Iowa—these early mutual savings banks encouraged thrift and made loans to responsible and credit-worthy borrowers. Depositors and borrowers alike were members of the society, with voting and oversight rights. This ensured that those who took out loans were carefully scrutinized and personally monitored by the lenders.

Congress stabilized, and to some degree nationalized, the system through the Federal Home Loan Bank Act of 1932. This measure regularized the long-term, amortized mortgage for home purchases, mobilized capital toward this end, and allowed Savings and Loans to pay higher interest than commercial banks on savings deposits. The chartering of the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) came in 1938, funneling still more money into the system. Tax reforms made the interest on home mortgages deductible, turning houses into a favored form of capital investment.

After World War II, the mortgage business soared. The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 guaranteed VA home loans for veterans at up to 100 percent of the selling price. President Harry Truman told the National Conference on Family Life that "children and dogs are as necessary to the welfare of this country as is Wall Street and the railroads." The sweeping Housing Act of 1949 committed the country to providing "a decent home . . . for every American family." Federal Housing Administration loan guarantees also came into play. In 1949 alone, the industry recorded 1,466,000 housing starts, an unprecedented number.

This housing boom had its own sociology. Nearly all the new VA- and FHA-insured loans went to young married couples starting their families. As the official Fannie Mae history of housing explains, federal mortgage programs "made home ownership available to many families

who could never have considered it otherwise.” They allowed Americans to express their preference “for bringing up children in the ‘wholesome, clean-air’ environment of the suburbs.”

Importantly, calculations of mortgage eligibility during this era counted only a husband’s income. Underwriters saw young married women as potential dropouts from the labor market once they became pregnant. This policy also had the unintended effect of holding housing prices down.

Americans responded to this favorable policy environment. Between 1945 and 1960, there was a 90-percent increase in the number of owner-occupied homes. The marriage rate climbed sharply, the fertility rate soared, and even the divorce rate fell steadily after 1946. By the early 1960s, the government’s pro-family housing policy could be judged a success. To be sure, there were problems: a broad national over-investment in housing, which retarded other forms of capital investment; a discouraging conformity in suburban housing design; and a design preference for the “companionate” model of marriage and home life, which abandoned the function-rich family. All the same, George Bailey would surely have been proud.

The housing and mortgage markets, however, began operating in weird new ways around 1970. A massive investment in housing continued, with total non-farm mortgage debt climbing from \$358 billion in 1970 to \$2.2 trillion by 1987, an after-inflation increase of 311 percent. The number of housing units climbed from 65 million to 90 million. Yet the number of young married couples (husband aged 25-34) in homes actually fell by 2 percent over these years. The number of child-rich households with six or more persons plunged by 57 percent.

What was happening? In short, the family-centered nature of the American

housing boom had unraveled. Policy changes were part of the dynamic. Under feminist legal pressures, the “husband-only” income rule for determining the maximum of a family’s mortgage disappeared. A wife’s income must also be counted. Results included upward pressure on housing prices and a disincentive to be a stay-at-home mother. Housing officials exhibited new interest in providing shelter for nontraditional households, explaining that there was no longer a “standard family” guiding housing demand. They introduced easier eligibility standards, and the proportion of new FHA mortgages going to married-couple households with children fell sharply. Government publications stressed that houses were increasingly purchased with “resalability” rather than “livability” in mind. This meant that housing was now more a form of investment and a hedge against inflation than a refuge from the elements.

Housing analysts George Sternlieb and James Hughes pointed to an even stranger development: while the number of distinct housing units climbed by 38 percent between 1970 and 1987, the average household size fell from 3.14 to 2.64 members, a decline of 16 percent. This meant that “the nation’s population is diffusing itself into an expanding supply network.” More darkly, they concluded that “the very decline in the size of household” may be “a consequence of the availability and costs of housing units generally.”

Translated from academese, this meant that America’s very success in building homes now perversely encouraged family breakup through separation and divorce. Direct and indirect subsidies also encouraged home ownership among singles by substituting government help for the economic gains, such as economies of scale, once provided by marriage and family living.

In addition, your friendly neighborhood Savings and Loan societies changed. In the late 1970s, they gained the ability to offer checking accounts and shed many state regulations. In 1980, Congress gave the “thrifts” power to make commercial loans, issue credit cards, and otherwise behave like regular banks. The result was disaster: a series of speculative loans and investments brought on the infamous Savings and Loan crisis of the 1986-95 period. Half of the nation’s savings and loans went out of business; taxpayers took over about \$125 billion in bad debt. And George Bailey rolled over in his Hollywood grave. At great public cost, stability returned to the housing and mortgage markets by the later 1990s.

Our current crisis was a product of the new century, a fairly conventional speculative bubble involving legislators, regulators, lenders, great financial houses, and borrowers in roughly equal culpability. Under the mantra that “housing prices in America have never gone down,” modest eligibility standards for taking out mortgages were essentially scrapped. Risk was “shared”—read hidden—by the relatively new process of bundling mortgages for resale to investors. As housing prices soared, the rush to get into the game produced all the usual assurances from the financial talking heads, until the inevitable collapse.

So what would George Bailey do now? First of all, I think he would want to examine the sociology of the crisis. How many of the imperiled homebuyers are actually young families with children? These he would want to help. How many are singletons who used this speculative opportunity to jump onto the housing escalator? How many are empty-nesters who rode the bubble to move into a McMansion? How many are would-be investors looking for quick turnarounds in a rising market? There would be little sympathy for these latter cases, I suspect.

To help threatened families with children, George Bailey would support private and public efforts that put them first in line for access to renegotiated and publicly guaranteed mortgages. "Households with dependent children" would serve as the defining criterion. He would also probably agree with guidelines recently offered by the Heritage Foundation, including:

All government-assisted refinancing should go only to homeowners who use that home as their primary residence.

No help should be given to investors, speculators, owners of vacation homes, homebuilders, realtors, mortgage brokers, or bankers.

Help should also be denied to anyone who lied or made misrepresentations on their original mortgage applications.

George Bailey would surely marvel at the stupidity and greed of our current crop of great financiers, who make Mr. Potter look like a genius—even a humanitarian. George Bailey knew truly good capitalists: his friend Sam Wainwright earned money through manufacturing useful products (including, yes, war materiel). He would shake his head, though, at Wall Street's more recent "Masters of the Universe," who claimed their vast personal incomes and stock options simply by piling onto the latest investment fad. He would want to see these sham geniuses and their boards of directors held personally liable to stockholders and investors. He would expect criminal fraud to be vigorously investigated as well.

I doubt, too, that George Bailey would support a quasi-public bailout of Bear Stearns or any other threatened financial giant. He would probably agree with many contemporary analysts that Bear Stearns has been an unusually nasty

company without a shred of publicspiritedness. In its failure, it would merely have reaped what it had sown. Bailey would dismiss as preposterous claims that the fate of the American and world economies hinged on this rogue company's survival.

Over the long haul, George Bailey would probably try to return the housing and mortgage industries to their real purpose: providing homes to families. He would support limiting the tax deduction on home-mortgage interest to one principal residence per family. He might even favor a cap on the amount that could be deducted, so that only

good shelter—not princely luxury—enjoyed favored tax treatment. And he would probably redistribute tax benefits to families according to their number of dependent children, raising either the child tax credit or the per-capita deduction for children—or both.

As his father had noted, "These families have children." That, I believe, would be George Bailey's touchstone for reform. ■

Allan C. Carlson is president of The Howard Center for Family, Religion, & Society in Rockford, Illinois. His latest book is Third Ways.

First Loser

Playing the odds for the veepstakes

By Michael Brendan Dougherty

THE VICE PRESIDENCY is a baffling office. John Nance Garner said it wasn't worth "a warm bucket of spit," but its occupant is a heartbeat away from the presidency. Given little consideration at the Constitutional Convention, the veep's job was to preside over the Senate and be a placeholder in case the president died. John Adams expressed the uncertain nature of his duties, declaring upon his election, "I am vice president. In this I am nothing, but I may be everything."

Three of the last four vice presidents, George H.W. Bush, Al Gore, and Dick Cheney, were accomplished politicians when they assumed the office. Dan Quayle, a lightweight senator picked to satisfy ideological conservatives, serves as an object lesson in how not to choose a running mate. John McCain and the eventual Democratic nominee will consider which politician can win them a swing state or send an appropriate mes-

sage to the general electorate. They should also consider what their political partner wants to accomplish in office.

McCain will also deal with ideological groups that seek to place one of their own on the ticket. Bobby Jindal, the new governor of Louisiana, is a favorite of movement conservatives. He passed an ethics reform bill in his first month in office, but has no other executive experience or national profile. Beyond the good press he generates in conservative journals, there is little to recommend him. In an editorial for the *Politico*, Jeremy Lott, author of *The Warm Bucket Brigade*, urged McCain to pick Oklahoma Sen. Tom Coburn. The radical conservative has the budget-hawk bona fides to match McCain. Furthermore, McCain lost all primaries in the South except the one in which Coburn endorsed him. But Coburn's presence would energize liberals as much as conservatives. Does McCain want to answer

questions about Terry Schiavo or extemporize on whether abortion doctors should receive the death penalty?

Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty is a more practical choice. Chairman of the National Governors Association, Pawlenty is a popular GOP chief executive in a blue state. He overcame a \$4.3-billion deficit without raising taxes but by cutting local government aid and state services. He is forgettable on the stump, however, and he recently incurred the wrath of some party insiders when he crossed conservative governors like Haley Barbour and Mark Sanford by proposing a \$6-billion addition to President Bush's stimulus package.

House Minority Leader John Boehner is promoting his friend Rob Portman, an Ohio congressman who generated support among House Republicans by donating half a million dollars from his campaign chest to the NRCC when he took the job of U.S. trade representative. But Portman is not known well outside the lower chamber and his Cincinnati district.

Most of the speculation about McCain's choice centers around Florida Gov. Charlie Crist. Just 51, Crist is popular in his home state, and his endorsement of McCain was seen as pivotal to knocking Mitt Romney out of the race. But his policy résumé is thin. His recent preoccupations include combating spam, opposing gambling, and supporting environmental issues—hardly the stuff of top executives. Crist also committed a potentially disqualifying gaffe when he suggested he was open to reparations for slavery. His stage presence—there is no other way to say it—is effeminate. In fact, several wannabe veeps come off this way, including Sen. Lindsey Graham and former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman.

On the other side of the political spectrum is the unmistakable presence of Virginia Sen. Jim Webb. While Obama is a northern progressive who appeals to independents, Webb is a southern inde-

pendent who appeals to partisan Democrats. Webb offers military experience (two Purple Hearts), authenticity, and appeal to working-class whites—making up for several of Obama's weaknesses. His decision to resign from Reagan's Defense Department because he opposed cuts to the Navy suggests he could work well with military brass. Some Democrats argue that Webb's presence on the ticket might even put Virginia in the blue column, especially with former Democratic governor Mark Warner likely to replace retiring Republican John Warner in the Senate.

But Webb's winning qualities make him problematic. His authenticity comes with a bulldog personality ill-suited to the tasks of vice president. He has an obvious distaste for the campaign hustings. And his appeal to ethnic white voters comes at the expense of pleasing gun-control groups and the multicultural Left. Democrats may also hesitate to relinquish his seat in the Senate, one Republicans will target in 2012.

Another freshman senator on Obama's list is Pennsylvania's Bob Casey Jr. An Irish Catholic and heir to a political dynasty in the Keystone State, Casey's selection would be a daring attempt to win a swing state that gave Obama trouble in the primaries. By choosing the pro-life Casey, Obama would give weight to his claims of being an independent. But Casey's short record on Capitol Hill would make it easy to attack the Democratic ticket as inexperienced.

Obama might choose Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. Not only would she add another "first in history" element to the ticket, she passes many liberal litmus tests and can claim some of Obama's post-partisan appeal by highlighting her record of working with moderate Republicans. Before Mark Parkinson became her lieutenant governor, he was chairman of the state GOP. Her fans point out that she is the daughter of pop-

ular former Ohio governor, John Gilligan. But Sebelius could be a drag on the superstar Obama. Her response to Bush's 2007 State of the Union was as stiff and flimsy as balsa wood.

A much stronger candidate for flipping Ohio into the Democratic column would be Gov. Ted Strickland. A former Methodist minister, Strickland got an "A" from the NRA and won over 20 percent of registered Republicans in 2006. He is more likely to be picked by Clinton, for whom he campaigned. But he has two problems: he lacks the foreign-policy credentials a senator might offer and has made the thankless job of reforming the criminal-justice system a priority.

In the interest of party unity, the Democrats may urge their eventual nominee to choose the runner-up. In March, Obama rebuffed the suggestion from Clinton that he become her running mate. And when asked at a recent debate whether they would consider each other, both candidates stood in awkward silence before declining to answer. After a year of clawing at each other, they make a highly unlikely political couple.

Unfortunately for the presidential candidates, the politicians most likely to reassure voters want to do more than attend funerals and play hatchet man during the campaign. They want to effect change on their pet issues—and they usually cause trouble doing so. Al Gore negotiated the Kyoto Treaty, which had no chance of ratification. And Dick Cheney co-ordinated so much of the Bush foreign policy that he is held personally responsible for its manifest failures.

Tyler and Truman proved that the vice presidency could make a man. Cheney proved that it could unmake one. When he entered the race in 2000, pundits from George Will to Jon Stewart touted Cheney's credentials and implied that he was a better candidate than Bush himself. He began his vice presidency as everything, and may yet be nothing by the end. ■

Mr. Zbig

Brzezinski brings wisdom—and controversy—to Barack Obama's campaign

By Philip Weiss

TO MEET ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI is to have no doubt that he is an important man. The morning of our appointment, I was informed that I would have 15 minutes, and 14 minutes and 30 seconds into the interview Brzezinski glanced at his watch and said, "One more question." Cordial, aristocratic, precise. He wore a fine pinstriped suit and black boots in a hunter's style, with a black strap crossing the throat. The famous hooded eyes gazed out at the street.

It was a couple of days before Brzezinski's 80th birthday, but it didn't seem like a landmark to him: "It doesn't look much different from anything else." When I asked whether he didn't feel a sense of satisfaction, he shrugged. "I honestly don't have any feeling about it."

His voice crackled with age, but he was immune to all pressure, especially when the name Obama came up.

"George Bush is more progressive than Obama on the issue of Israeli settlements," I said. "He says mildly they should go, Obama won't even say that."

"You can't expect of any candidate for president for any party to get into the technicalities and details of foreign policy in the course of a presidential campaign. That's not the context for a discussion of really detailed options."

"In the Ford-Carter debates on Eastern Europe they got into details," I said.

The hawklike head turned from the window to me for once. "Like what?"

"You called my bluff."

He smiled without a hint of triumph. "Sometimes it's wise not to bluff."

At 80, Brzezinski is nearly as relevant

as he was 30 years ago, when he was the hawkish, crewcut national security adviser to Jimmy Carter. "He's in fine shape. As clear-minded and articulate as he's ever been," says William Quandt, a professor of international relations at the University of Virginia who worked for Brzezinski in government. Quandt's book *Peace Process* says that Brzezinski has had a lifelong rivalry with Henry Kissinger, but Brzezinski is leaner and apparently healthier than the 83-year-old *wünder*, not to say more glamorous for having advised Barack Obama on foreign policy. Though he has no official role in the campaign, Brzezinski has become a lightning rod for hardline Israel activists, who fear that Obama will turn against the Jewish state. They point to Brzezinski's realist views, for instance his recent visit to Syria, which he says must be brought into American diplomatic efforts concerning Iraq and Palestine, and his endorsement of the book *The Israel Lobby*.

"I have my own views of foreign affairs, which I have been expressing publicly," he says. "Therefore I wanted from the very beginning to be known as a supporter but not as a spokesman for or some sort of fancy title—adviser, member of the team—and that's the way it's worked."

Brzezinski has nonetheless become a punching bag for Jewish supporters of Hillary Clinton, including Congressman Anthony Weiner and guru Ann Lewis. His name is a shibboleth among Zionists. When I e-mailed Norman Podhoretz, he referred me to his book *World War*

IV, in which he devotes several disdainful pages to Brzezinski, saying that he has an "obsessive animus against Israel." Brzezinski waved off the criticisms:

I surfaced in the public domain probably in the late '50s early '60s, the Kennedy years. I have been expressing views on foreign affairs publicly and often in a context which was controversial. ... My view of the Middle East is that it is in the interest of the U.S. to have a resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and the only resolution that is likely to be enduring and acceptable is one that both Israelis and Palestinians can accept, and that, in turn, means a two-state solution. When I first started talking about that, that was a no-no. Today a very significant portion not just of American opinion and, more specifically, Jewish public opinion accepts that perspective, and even more so in Israel. So I'm not particularly bothered by the criticisms of some people whose views don't change very much over time or are not particularly tolerant.

"Does it cause you pain?" The former National Security boss, who emigrated with his family to Canada from Poland in 1938, didn't bat an eye. "I honestly don't think that the people who speak the loudest necessarily represent the largest number of people in the Jewish community. At least I have on a personal plane not felt anything inimical,

although on the public plane, yes I'm aware that I've been attacked and sometimes unfairly. But I'm philosophical about it."

Brzezinski's status presents numerous ironies. A generation ago, the last time he was schooling a smart but provincial presidential candidate, he was mistrusted by the Left and even the center as a hawk. "A symbol of the nastiest Cold Warrior," says Leon Hadar of the Cato Institute. Yet under Jimmy Carter in 1979 he helped deliver the Camp David accords, which gave Israel a lasting peace with Egypt. Says realist scholar Robert Pape, "In the last 30 years what are the things that have most improved Israel's security? Israel getting nuclear weapons, and ... brokering a peace deal with Egypt. Brzezinski was at the heart of making that peace possible. And it's become a lasting peace. ... You would be hard pressed to find dramatic change in [that situation in] the last 30 or 40 years."

Pape ascribes the demonization of Brzezinski to tension in the presidential race and to the fact that he wants to revive diplomacy as a tool of American policy. "Go through the litany of foreign-policy issues," he says, "there are just so many that are at the boil now, and one of the things that is so clear is we have grossly underused our diplomatic power. ... We seem to have forgotten we are the strongest power on the planet."

Pape has been an adviser to both the Ron Paul and Obama campaigns. He emphasizes that one must be even more confidential about such service than when serving in government. That would seem to be especially true this cycle, when Obama's statement that he wants to change the "mindset" that produced the Iraq War has provided a wedge to Hillary Clinton's backers.

"The anxiety on the part of the Jewish Right is that Obama is the Manchurian candidate," says Joshua Landis, a pro-

fessor at Oklahoma University, "that he has secret sympathy with Muslims, and the whole war of terror which relies on demonizing Islam isn't going to float. They hear him undoing everything that's been done under Bush, the idea that Israel's war with the Palestinians is America's war with terrorism. They've worked hard to cut out any daylight on these issues. And here is Obama trying to put the daylight back in there."

Clinton's team has targeted several experts who have talked to Obama, from Samantha Power of the Kennedy School to Rob Malley, a former peace negotiator with enormous standing on the Left, to retired Air Force Gen. Merrill McPeak, who once spoke freely about the power of the Israel lobby to limit debate. Power left after calling Hillary a "monster." McPeak has hung in there, though Obama has distanced himself from his Middle East commentary. Malley is nowhere to be seen.

Brzezinski "was asked by the Obama people to lie low. That's my impression," says Hadar. But Brzezinski is enjoying his moment. He has written two recent op-eds for the *Washington Post* that turned heads: one said that we must withdraw from Iraq promptly and undertake a "regional rehabilitation," including Iraq's neighbors; another argued that "five years of brainwashing" about a war on terror has turned America into a paranoid society and, in the world's eyes, made us part of a new "axis of evil," along with Iran and Israel.

Quandt points out that Brzezinski won't be getting a government job, even in an Obama administration. "He may do a chore or two"—say, an international mission—but foreclosing ambition has "freed him up to say whatever he thinks. He can be a little irreverent where people who want to work in government might bite their tongues."

There were no belly laughs in our meeting, but plenty of dry wit. When I

pointed out that a recent newscast referred to him as the father of MSNBC host Mika Brzezinski, he nodded. "It is the sad fate of parents who have successful children. That happens to me increasingly. ... I think one has to adjust." When I told him that many of us who cheer his plainspokenness on the Middle East decried him in the '70s, he laughed. "Yes—life changes."

That was it for reflection. When I asked Brzezinski, who came from a highly privileged family in a state engulfed by the Soviet Union, what role his own background had played in his hawkish positions during the Cold War, he said, "I'm the last one who can judge. How do you make a judgment whether your views on a particular subject are the product of personal background and to what extent they're the product of insights, experience, knowledge? I comment, not currently, on issues pertaining to China, where I haven't had terribly much personal background in terms of family. I'm interested in strategy. ... Certainly Europe and World War II were contributions to my own intellectual formation. That's undeniable. Whether that's made me better prepared, or not as well prepared, to make political judgments, I'll let others judge. All I can do is express my best opinions and leave it at that."

Brzezinski grants the same discretion to his critics. "I have no idea what drives their thinking," he said of the neocons, whom he believes to be discredited but hanging on by their fingernails.

The animus toward Brzezinski in right-wing Jewish circles began in the '70s, when he and Quandt led a study group for the Brookings Institution that argued that a two-state solution was the only way out of a violent future in the Middle East. "People were accusing us of terrible things," Quandt says.

Brzezinski was then a Cold War hawk. He opposed Kissinger's détente with the Soviet Union, preferring the more

confrontational approach later adopted by Reagan. In the Middle East, he pursued Kissinger's strategy of maintaining an alliance with Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran to preserve American access to the Persian Gulf oil. "He was clear-eyed that we had to defend the gulf," Landis says. "When the Iran revolution broke out [in 1979] we were caught with our pants down. Iran and Israel were our two policemen."

Brzezinski has been utterly consistent in calling on the U.S. to push for Palestinian self-determination, a position favored by the realist school of international relations and lately echoed by the Iraq Study Group in 2006. Still it remains on the edge of the American foreign-policy establishment. Thirty years ago, the Brookings Institution backed the idea. Today leading think tanks change the topic to Israel's security needs.

Mainstream Jewish leaders don't applaud Brzezinski and Carter's great achievement. "The pro-Israel right doesn't like the [Camp David] treaty. It's a cold peace. It causes no enthusiasm. We gave up the Sinai, what did we get?" said M.J. Rosenberg of the Israel Policy Forum.

Brzezinski also suffers for being a Polish aristocrat. Much of the enmity toward Germany felt by Jews postwar transferred to the Poles after Germany became an ally, says Rosenberg. "Poland became an easy whipping boy." The late Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin was above all that: Rosenberg says that the Polish-born Begin chatted in Polish with Brzezinski at Camp David and played chess with him. Quandt notes that Begin gave Brzezinski a document found in the Israeli archives showing that his father Tadeusz Brzezinski, a diplomat, had helped save Jews. "The word went out, 'Get off their cases,'" Quandt recalls.

Podhoretz describes Brzezinski as a realist with a "dash of liberal internationalism" and says his views are about

to "sink into oblivion." Indeed, Brzezinski has been "rooting for an American defeat as the only way to save [his] worldview from winding up on the ash-heap of history."

A lot is at stake for the neocons. Shifts in Obama's team are noted almost daily in the *New York Sun*, a neoconservative newspaper that is gratified that former Clinton NSC aide Daniel Shapiro is leading Obama's Middle East group. Hadar is disappointed that Obama has surrounded himself with predictable "mediocre" names, including Susan Rice and Anthony Lake. Why couldn't Obama have shaken it up a little more with realist names, say, John Mearsheimer or members of the Center for American Progress? That would be his downfall, Hadar concedes.

"A lot of Jewish superdelegates are waiting for Obama to say the right thing," Landis says. "He may say the right things. It's going to be a squeaker, and they're going to have his testicles in a vice." Hadar hopes for Chuck Hagel as secretary of state, but says that if Obama becomes president and doesn't nominate establishment figure Richard Holbrooke, "he will get phone calls every five minutes, including at 3 a.m. in the morning, from lobbyists and others who will make life horrible for him."

Of course Obama is so opaque that everyone is projecting onto him. A week after my meeting with Brzezinski, I emailed to ask what he saw in the senator. Through his secretary, Brzezinski replied with the following statement:

In my judgment, the United States and the world confront a fundamental historical discontinuity. The world of the Cold War or earlier, the world of the struggle against the totalitarianism of the Nazi/Stalinist variety, is finished. We live in a complicated, much more dynamic, much more politi-

cally awakened world, in which the population of the world ... is politically active, stirring, restless, increasingly anti-Western, increasingly anti-American. And to manage that world well one has to understand ... how the global context has changed. Hillary Clinton would be a perfectly competent president, but her view of the world, in my judgment, is quite conventional and traditional. That criticism is even more applicable to John McCain, who in my view is a great patriot and a great hero but represents essentially the past. I have been impressed talking with Barack Obama, and also from reading what he has been saying, that he understands that this great historical discontinuity has taken place and that America has to redefine its place in the world. In fact, America has to redefine itself. And I think that he symbolizes that needed change, and if he becomes president he can help America effectively make that change.

Brzezinski's view helps explain the legions of young people who are gaga for Obama, and also suggests why Brzezinski has never left the stage. He is youthful at heart.

As I left his office, I complimented him on his fitness and said happy birthday. He did a little jig—or as much of a jig as a Polish aristocrat in hunting boots and bespoke suit will allow himself.

"What the hell is 80?" he cried. "It's a number eight followed by a zero. And what is 90 but a nine followed by a zero? And 100. Just a one with two zeroes." He drew the numbers in the air.

Why not secretary of state? ■

Philip Weiss is at work on a book about Jewish issues. His blog is www.philipweiss.org/mondoweiss/

Jersey Boys

The Garden State Senate race is just one midget short of a circus.

By W. James Antle III

IF THE INCUMBENT is re-elected, he will be 90 by the end of his term. To accomplish this feat, he first must get past the South Jersey Democratic Party bosses, the owner of a nightclub called Kiss and Fly who likes ski trips and adult beverages, a Ron Paul revolutionary, a dentist turned right-wing state legislator, and a Republican ex-congressman who may get kicked off his party's primary ballot. This isn't a reality TV series or a story in the *Onion*. It isn't even another California recall election, although Gary Coleman and a porn star are the only missing elements. It's just business as usual in this year's New Jersey Senate race.

Garden State politics is frequently messy. Eighty-four-year-old Democratic Sen. Frank Lautenberg is running for re-election to a seat he won six years ago due to scandal. He served three terms during the 1980s and '90s before New Jersey Democrats plucked him from retirement—after the legal deadline had already passed—when it looked like Sen. Robert Torricelli might lose the election because of his ethical woes. Despite his age, Lautenberg remains the heavy favorite, but he has nevertheless attracted a colorful crew of challengers.

Among the first to climb aboard the merry-go-round was Anne Evans Estabrook, a real-estate executive and former head of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce. Estabrook hoped to borrow a few pages from the playbook of Christine Todd Whitman, who parlayed an unexpectedly close Senate race against Bill Bradley into the state's governorship.

Like Whitman, Estabrook focused on taxes.

"Whether it is young families unable to buy a first home, working families struggling to make ends meet, or seniors who are selling their lifelong homes because they can't afford the tax bills—New Jersey is simply becoming unaffordable," she said in a statement upon entering the race. "Frank Lautenberg would make it worse by raising taxes again." The Lautenberg campaign didn't seem too worried in its competing statement: "We look forward to hearing her detailed plans for reversing President Bush's ban on stem cell research, providing health insurance to the thousands of uninsured children in New Jersey, and ending the Iraq war."

Estabrook was the preferred candidate of most New Jersey Republican leaders. She was everything they wanted: wealthy enough to finance her own campaign (she spent \$1.6 million between Dec. 31 and March), ideologically nondescript, and unlikely to threaten the state GOP establishment. They also knew what they didn't want—the other two declared Republican candidates. Ramapo College finance professor Murray Sabrin is the nation's most prominent Ron Paul Republican; state Sen. Joseph Pennacchio is a dentist from Morris County and one of the more conservative members of the legislature. They are both pro-life. Sabrin passionately opposes the Iraq War and nearly cost Christie Whitman re-election when he was the Libertarian Party's gubernatorial nominee in 1997.

Thus it was quite a blow to party leaders when Estabrook withdrew from the race on March 5 after a mini-stroke, leading to a frantic search for a Republican candidate who wasn't Sabrin or Pennacchio. An early prospect was Andy Unanue, a millionaire former Goya Foods executive with moderate leanings and support in the Republican-machine counties. But problems with Unanue emerged almost immediately.

It turned out that he had actually been living in New York since 2004, though he was still registered to vote at his parents' New Jersey home. He had been convicted of drunk driving and was forced out of Goya Foods for allegedly showing up to work intoxicated, among other things. Republican rivals ridiculed him as a "playboy nightclub owner," unacceptable even in the home state of the Bada Bing. Unanue didn't even bother to cut his ski vacation short, spending the brief life of his campaign in Vail, Colorado.

Unanue declared his candidacy on Easter and was out of the race by Tax Day. In the interim, Republican leaders all the way up to presidential nominee John McCain tried to recruit biotechnology executive John Crowley as a replacement. Crowley was tempted but ultimately said no. "In my heart I really wanted to find a way to do this," he told the *New York Times*. "But in my gut, I decided that now is not the time." Crowley called it "an intensely personal decision," yet it was less wrenching for New Jersey Republicans who confessed to the *Times* that they did not know where the would-be candidate

stood on “the war in Iraq, the economy and abortion rights.”

Finally, former Congressman Dick Zimmer agreed to run in Unanue’s place. Zimmer served three terms in the House before losing an expensive 1996 Senate race to Robert Torricelli, 53 percent to 43 percent. Zimmer ran for his old congressional seat in 2000, but lost to Democrat Rush Holt by a little more than 1,000 votes. “Zimmer is the frontrunner. He fits the profile of what people think a Republican needs to be to win in New Jersey,” says John Weingart of Rutgers’s Eagleton Institute of Politics. “Pro-choice with a few footnotes and fiscally conservative with fewer footnotes.” Sabrin communications director George Ajjan describes Zimmer differently: “He’s a liberal loser lobbyist.”

Pennacchio’s campaign is trying to get Zimmer disqualified from running in the GOP primary. Their contention is that Unanue, a nonresident campaigning from the Colorado ski slopes, was never a legitimate candidate and his exit from the race doesn’t create a vacancy on the ballot—and therefore Zimmer cannot replace him. As the *Philadelphia Inquirer* put it, “Pennacchio ... is considering suing Zimmer or Unanue or whomever it takes to keep Zimmer from running.”

New Jersey is notoriously lenient in enforcing its ballot requirements, as the Republicans learned during the last contest for this Senate seat. But in the extremely unlikely event that the effort to disqualify Zimmer succeeds, the result would be the New Jersey GOP’s worst nightmare: a Sabrin-Pennacchio primary. To get an idea of what such a match-up would be like, imagine the 2008 Republican presidential field being narrowed to Ron Paul and Duncan Hunter.

In fact, Paul is actively supporting Sabrin’s campaign, something few self-described Ron Paul Republicans can say. “Dr. Sabrin published an op-ed in the *New York Times* criticizing the

Federal Reserve in 1976, the same year Ron Paul was elected to Congress,” says Ajjan. “These two men have been in the fight a long time.” The connection has helped Sabrin raise money “in 47 out of 50 states.” Toward the end of April, Paul will be heading to the Garden State to headline a fundraising reception for the candidate. Sabrin supporters are calling it “Freedom in New Jersey Day.”

Sabrin is sometimes more willing to play party loyalist than Paul. “He is supporting John McCain for president in November,” Ajjan says, something Paul has given no indication he will do. Similarly, while Sabrin is strongly antiwar, he is more inclined than Paul to take the George Aiken line: declare victory and go home. “Our brave men and women accomplished their mission and won the

achieved “NOW!” according to his website). Before he entered politics, his views could be a bit more eccentric. Under the pseudonym Joseph Penn, he wrote *The Nationalist Manifesto*, which included proposals for putting the homeless in military camps, promoting the abortifacient RU-486 as an “alternative” to abortion, and changing the color of currency every few years to thwart the black market. Pennacchio claims to have “evolved away from” many of these opinions.

The Republicans aren’t having all the fun. Centrist Congressman Rob Andrews announced that he would challenge Lautenberg in the Democratic primary, angering many party leaders. But Andrews has also received the support of South Jersey Democrats who resent their northern counterparts’ control of

IMAGINE THE 2008 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL FIELD BEING **NARROWED TO RON PAUL AND DUNCAN HUNTER.**

Iraq War by removing Saddam Hussein,” he says. “Americans continue to support our troops and approve going after the terrorists who attacked America on September 11th.” He describes our continued involvement in Iraq as a fruitless attempt to “end another country’s civil war.”

Then again, Sabrin can also be more radical. He has promised to resign from Congress if all combat troops don’t come home from Iraq by September 2010. He is recruiting a slate of congressional candidates and Republican convention delegates willing to take the same pledge. Sabrin shares Paul’s longstanding commitment to free-market economics, as well as his traditional conservative views on abortion and immigration.

“Jersey Joe” Pennacchio is running a more conventionally Republican campaign, though he takes a populist line on energy independence (to be achieved in 10 years) and securing the borders (to be

the state party. Andrews’s relative youth (he’s 50) and regional backing could help him overcome his vote to authorize the Iraq War—in a Sabrin-Andrews race, the Democrat would be the prowar candidate—and give Lautenberg a scare.

Either way, New Jersey hasn’t sent a Republican to the Senate since Clifford Chase’s last victory in 1972. Experts don’t see that changing. “Either Democrat would be the frontrunner, even against Zimmer,” says Weingart. “Unless Lautenberg’s health changes radically, I don’t see people voting Republican. If Andrews wins the primary, I don’t see how they beat him at all.” The GOP candidates’ supporters no doubt beg to differ. No matter what happens, this much is clear: Jersey politicians can put on almost as good a show as Bruce Springsteen. ■

W. James Antle III is associate editor of The American Spectator.

Mission Accomplished?

May 1 will mark five years since George W. Bush stood on the deck of the *U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln* and triumphantly pronounced the “end of major combat operations.” Since then, we have incurred 97 percent of the war’s casualties and have spent an additional \$473 billion, but Iraq still isn’t the beacon of freedom we were promised. For an explanation, we turn to the war’s most enthusiastic supporters:

LIBERATION THEOLOGY

“Support for Saddam, including within his military organization, will collapse after the first whiff of gunpowder.”

—Richard Perle, chairman, Defense Policy Board, 7/11/02

“After liberation the streets of Basra and Baghdad are sure to erupt in joy.”

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 8/26/02

“Desert Storm II will be a walk in the park.”

—Kenneth Adelman, member, Defense Policy Board, 8/29/02

“If we come to Baghdad, Damascus and Tehran as liberators, we can expect overwhelming popular support.”

—Michael Ledeen, Freedom Scholar, American Enterprise Institute, 9/02

“We shall be greeted, I think, in Baghdad and Basra with kites and boom boxes.”

—Fouad Ajami, professor of Middle East studies, Johns Hopkins, 10/7/02

“You’re going to find, and this is very important, you’re going to find Iraqis out cheering American troops.”

—Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, 2/23/03

CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR, OH MY!

“There is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us. And there is no doubt that his aggressive regional ambitions will lead him into future confrontations with his neighbors—confrontations that will involve both the weapons he has today and the ones he will continue to develop with his oil wealth.”

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 8/26/02

“We know that he has the infrastructure, nuclear scientists to make a nuclear weapon. ... [W]e don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.”

—National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, 9/8/02

“[Saddam’s] regime has amassed large clandestine stocks of biological weapons, including anthrax and botulism toxin and possibly smallpox. His regime has amassed large clandestine stockpiles of chemical weapons, including VX and sarin and mustard gas.

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 9/18/02

“We know that [Saddam] has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country.”

—Former Vice President Al Gore, 9/23/02

“It is clear ... that left unchecked Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons.”

—Sen. Hillary Clinton, 10/10/02

“Saddam Hussein certainly has chemical and biological weapons. There’s no question about that.”

—Representative Nancy Pelosi, 11/17/02

“Our conservative estimate is that Iraq today has a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agents. ... [Saddam] remains determined to acquire nuclear weapons. ... these are not assertions. These are facts, corroborated by many sources...”

—Secretary of State Colin Powell, 2/5/03

“We know [Saddam has] been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons, and we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons.”

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 3/16/03

“We know where they are. They’re in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhat.”

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 3/30/03

THE MISSING LINK

“I think Iraq is, actually, the big unspoken elephant in the room today. There’s a fair amount of evidence that Iraq had very close associations with Osama bin Laden in the past.”

—William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard*, the day after 9/11



NUMBERS GAME

"Now it isn't going to be over in 24 hours, but it isn't going to be months either."

—Richard Perle, 7/11/02

"It is unimaginable that the United States would have to contribute hundreds of billions of dollars and highly unlikely that we would even have to contribute tens of billions of dollars."

—Kenneth Pollack, former director for Persian Gulf Affairs,
U.S. National Security Council, 9/02

"I don't believe anything like a long-term commitment of 150,000 Americans will be necessary."

—Richard Perle, 10/3/02

"Five days or five weeks or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last any longer than that."

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 11/15/02

"I think it will go relatively quickly ... weeks rather than months."

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 3/16/03

"This conflict is still going to be relatively short."

—Sen. John McCain, 3/23/03

"Iraq will not require sustained aid."

—Mitchell Daniels, director of the White House Office
of Management and Budget, 4/21/03

SWIFT & BLOODLESS

"Tommy Franks and the coalition forces have demonstrated the old axiom that boldness on the battlefield produces swift and relatively bloodless victory. The three-week swing through Iraq has utterly shattered skeptics' complaints."

—Tony Snow, host of "Fox News Sunday," 4/13/03

"The only people who think this wasn't a victory are Upper West Side liberals and a few people here in Washington."

—Charles Krauthammer, *Washington Post* columnist, 4/19/03

"I think the ethnic differences in Iraq are there but they're exaggerated."

—Deputy Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz, 3/5/03

"There's been a certain amount of pop sociology in America ... that the Shia can't get along with the Sunni and the Shia in Iraq just want to establish some kind of Islamic fundamentalist regime. There's almost no evidence of that at all."

—William Kristol, 4/1/03

"[A] year from now, I'll be very surprised if there is not some grand square in Baghdad that is named after President Bush. There is no doubt that, with the exception of a small number of

"We've learned that Iraq has trained al-Qaeda members in bombmaking and poisons and deadly gases. And we know that after Sept. 11 Saddam Hussein's regime gleefully celebrated..."

—President George W. Bush, 10/7/02

"The war on terror involves Saddam Hussein because of the nature of Saddam Hussein, the history of Saddam Hussein, and his willingness to terrorize himself."

—President George W. Bush, 1/29/03

"What I want to bring your attention to today is the ... sinister nexus between Iraq and the al-Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations with modern methods of murder."

—Secretary of State Colin Powell, 2/5/03

"Secretary Powell ... presented not opinions, not conjecture, but facts demonstrating Iraq's ... ties to terrorist networks, including al-Qaeda-affiliated cells operating in Baghdad."

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 2/8/03

"There are al-Qaeda terrorists who operate in and out of Iraq ... The support of al-Qaeda is clear-cut."

—Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, 3/5/03

"You know, one of the hardest parts of my job is to connect Iraq to the War on Terror."

—President George W. Bush, 9/6/02

people close to a vicious regime, the people of Iraq have been liberated and they understand that they're liberated."

—Richard Perle, 9/22/03

"The terrorists in Iraq failed to incite an Iraqi civil war."

—President George W. Bush, 6/28/05

LAST THROES

"I think all foreigners should stop interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq."

—Deputy Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz, 7/22/03

"I keep reading stories about it's a country in chaos. This is simply not true. It is not a country in chaos, and Baghdad's not a city in chaos."

—L. Paul Bremer, administrator, Coalition Provisional Authority, 8/27/03

"There is obviously violence. ... But you're talking about specific, isolated acts just like you would get in an American city."

—Michael O'Hanlon, senior fellow, Brookings Institution, 9/28/03

"It is a last ditch—I think it is a desperate effort by these terrorists."

—Fred Barnes, editor of *The Weekly Standard*, 10/27/03

"[Insurgents] pose no strategic threat to the United States or to the coalition forces."

—L. Paul Bremer, 11/17/03

"These dead-enders are few in number and have little ability to inspire a broader following among the Iraqi people"

—Michael O'Hanlon and Stephen J. Solarz, 2/17/04

"Any remaining violence is due to thugs, gangs, and terrorists."

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 3/14/04

"Off the record: Paris is burning. On the record: Security and stability are returning to Iraq."

—Dan Senor, Coalition Provisional Authority spokesman discussing violence in Baghdad with reporters, April 2004

"I think they're in the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency."

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 6/20/05

"Why do they hate each other? Why do Sunnis kill Shiites? How do they tell the difference? They all look the same to me."

—Sen. Trent Lott, 9/28/06

"[The state of war in Iraq] reminded me, as I listened to these briefings, of what I faced in New York City when we had tremendously high levels of crime."

—Republican presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani, 1/11/07

"...like a normal outdoor market in Indiana in the summertime."

—Rep. Mike Pence, 4/1/07, after touring a Baghdad market accompanied by 100 soldiers, three Blackhawk helicopters, and two Apache gunships

ANY DAY NOW...

"I think the next few months will be critical."

—Sen. Pat Roberts, 7/3/03

"I would argue that the next three to six months will be critical."

—Sen. John McCain, 9/10/03

"The next six months in Iraq—which will determine the prospects for democracy-building there—are the most important six months in U.S. foreign policy in a long, long time."

—Thomas Friedman, *New York Times* columnist, 11/30/03

"The next six to seven months are critical."

—Sen. Hillary Clinton, 12/1/03

"Iraq now faces a critical moment."

—President George W. Bush, 5/5/04

"Our efforts are approaching a crucial moment."

—President George W. Bush, 5/18/04

"The terrorists know that this is a very critical time."

—Sen. John McCain, 6/23/04

"This is crunch time. Iraq will be won or lost in the next few months."

—Thomas Friedman, 11/28/04

"This is a very critical period in Iraq."

—Scott McClellan, White House press secretary, 6/24/05

"I think the next nine months are critical."

—Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. ambassador to Iraq, 6/29/05

"I have long been invested with ensuring the development of a peaceful, democratic Iraq. We are nearing the resolution of that process, and the next months will be critical."

—John Bolton, U.S. ambassador to the UN, 8/4/05

"The next six months are going to be very critical in Iraq."

—Sen. Chuck Hagel, 8/18/05

"I think we're in the end game now."

—Thomas Friedman, 9/25/05

"The developments over the next several months will be critical."

—Gen. David Petraeus, 10/5/05

"Within 12 months, Iraq will be well on its way."

—Zalmay Khalilzad, 10/25/05

"We've got, I think six months."

—Sen. John Warner, 11/17/05

"We will probably see significant progress in the next six months to a year."

—Sen. John McCain, 12/4/05

"The last two weeks may be seen as a turning point."

—Sen. Joseph Lieberman, 12/17/05

"The next six months are going to tell the story."

—Sen. Joseph Biden, 12/18/05

"I think the next six months really are going to determine whether this country is going to collapse into three parts or more or whether it's going to come together."

—Thomas Friedman, 12/18/05

"I think we're going to know after six to nine months whether this project has any chance of succeeding."

—Thomas Friedman, 1/23/06

"I think we're going to find out...in the next year to six months—probably sooner—whether a decent outcome is possible."

—Thomas Friedman, 5/11/06

"The next six months will be critical."

—Zalmay Khalilzad, 6/7/06

"By the end of the year, we will begin to draw down significant numbers of troops."

—Sen. Joe Lieberman, 7/7/06

"It's a critical time, yes."

—Sen. John McCain, 8/20/06

WHOSE WAR?

"I didn't advocate invasion."

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 11/20/05

"Huge mistakes were made, and I want to be very clear on this: They were not made by neoconservatives, who had almost no voice in what happened..."

—Richard Perle, 11/3/06

"I do not feel 'remorseful,' since I had and have no involvement with our Iraq policy. I opposed the military invasion of Iraq before it took place."

—Michael Ledeen, 11/4/06

"I don't like to characterize myself as a supporter of the invasion."

—Kenneth M. Pollack, 11/07

NEXT WAR?

"The notion that the United States is getting ready to attack

Iran is simply ridiculous. Having said that, all options are on the table."

—President George W. Bush, 2/22/05

"We should undertake the legitimate self-defense to which we are entitled, by moving against the terrorist training camps and the improvised explosive device assembly lines and manufacturing sites inside the Islamic Republic [of Iran]."

—Michael Ledeen, 3/27/07

"We have to be ready to use military force against Iran. ... We can try diplomacy. I am not hopeful about that."

—William Kristol, 7/19/06

"Why wait? ... It would be easier to act sooner rather than later. Yes, there would be repercussions—and they would be healthy ones, showing a strong American that has rejected further appeasement."

—William Kristol, 7/24/06

"I don't think there's any doubt, based on the information we have, that Iran is interfering in Iraq. ... So I think if President Bush as commander in chief believes that information is accurate, he is fully entitled to take defensive actions, which could include going after the Revolutionary Guards inside Iran."

—John Bolton, 8/22/07

"The Iranian regime needs to know that if it stays on its present course, the international community is prepared to impose serious consequences. The United States joins other nations in sending a clear message: We will not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon."

—Vice President Dick Cheney, 10/21/07

"None of the alternatives to military action ... can possibly work. We've got three carriers in the region and a lot of submarines. ... It would take five minutes. You'd wake up one morning and the strikes would have been ordered and carried out during the night. All the president has to do is say go."

—Norman Podhoretz, editor of *Commentary*, 11/1/07

P.S.

"I don't know where [Osama bin Laden] is. You know, I just don't spend that much time on him ... I truly am not concerned about him."

—President George W. Bush, 3/13/02

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Barr Fight

The former GOP stalwart could give conservatives a choice in November.

In the '90s, Bob Barr was known as a socially conservative Republican congressman from Georgia. Since leaving Congress, he has made a mark as a defender of the Constitution, working to build a Left-Right coalition in defense of civil liberties trampled in the war on terror. He's now pondering a run as the Libertarian Party's presidential candidate and recently sat down with *TAC* to discuss the ideas that would animate his campaign.

TAC: Tell us about yourself—where you come from, important political and intellectual developments, how you arrived at the place you are now.

Until I entered college, I grew up overseas, living in a number of places in which military dictatorships and tyrannical governments ran the country. Those societies didn't have anything approaching the freedom that we do, and I think that really colored the rest of my life.

We lived in Iraq for several years when I was in grade school. Also in Peru, Panama, Colombia, West Pakistan, Canada, Malaysia, and Tehran, where I graduated from high school.

TAC: That trumps Barack Obama! How did you get into politics?

During the '70s, when I was working for the CIA, the Hatch Act prevented me from becoming actively involved in politics. So as soon as I left the Agency, when I moved down to Georgia to prac-

tice law, I had a tremendous amount of pent-up interest. I immediately became involved in the Republican Party, initially in the George H.W. Bush campaign, when he was involved in the primary leading up to the '80 race.

I worked my way up through the hierarchic precinct and district levels, was on the state committee down there, and became general counsel and then chairman for a local party. I was not involved from a partisan standpoint during the four years that I served as U.S. attorney, but then as soon as I left that job, I became active again in local politics and ran in 1992 for the U.S. Senate. There were five of us in the primary. I was in a runoff with the eventual winner, Paul Coverdell.

I went back to practicing law and in 1993 saw an opportunity. Bill Clinton was very unpopular in the 7th district, and the incumbent supported him at least on two key issues: the tax increase and the gun-control bill. He was seen jogging with him. We plastered that picture everywhere and beat him in the 1994 election.

TAC: Describe the ideological trajectory from conservative to libertarian and from activist to potential candidate.

It goes back to my upbringing and my view of the freedoms that we have. They can disappear, they can be taken away, and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to regain liberty lost.

The defining moment for me was 9/11 and the government's reaction to it. That was a quantum step in the direction of single-branch government.

I voted for the Patriot Act—but I certainly would not do it again. It was probably the worst vote I cast in Congress. At the time, we had obtained assurances from the administration that they would limit the applicability of the Patriot Act provisions. They promised that they would engage in appropriate and full reporting and disclosure to the Congress, and we were able to secure sunset clauses for a number of provisions.

But it became clear very quickly that the administration did not intend to limit the use of the Patriot Act. So one of my primary activities over the last five years since leaving Congress has been trying to undo the damage wrought by the Patriot Act and preventing further abuses. We put together a group involving everybody from the American Conservative Union to the ACLU to Americans for Tax Reform and Eagle Forum—a number of different folks from across the ideological spectrum—to fight this unprecedented assault on the Bill of Rights by our own government.

Over the ensuing five years, it became clear to me the Republican Party was not going to change, and I decided that whatever years the Lord leaves me on this earth, I was not going to waste them remaining involved with a party that had no interest in individual liberty.

TAC: Do you also regret your vote authorizing the Iraq War?

That vote was based—I will put it as charitably as possible—on faulty information. The legislation was presented and construed by a lot of us as more

limited than it turned out to be. If Congress had been presented with a resolution that said we want you to authorize the use of massive military force or an occupying force in Iraq that will last anywhere from five years to as long as one can speculate, I don't think there would have been that many folks who would have voted for it.

It was presented as a situation where we had an immediate problem that needed to be taken care of. They said there was a plan in place that was consistent with the traditional role of the U.S. military—not nation-building, not as an occupying force.

TAC: What did you think was going to happen? What's the alternative to occupying a country once you go in?

You should assure yourself before you go in that there is a certain minimal level of support for what you are doing. This apparently was not done. You need to go in with the force you need. That was not done.

TAC: What should the U.S. do about Iran?

I think a lot of people, perhaps even some of our policy makers, tend to lump all the countries in that part of the world together. And that is a serious and perhaps a fatal mistake. Iran is not Iraq. It is a very different country, from a religious, from a historical, and from a political standpoint. The people have had a much greater degree of political participation than in Iraq. That can be built on. It is a country that has a great deal of economic and philosophical compatibility with the United States. That can be built on. There are a very large number of Iranian-Americans in this country. There's reason for that: the two countries do share much in common.

I think the United States needs to deal with the government in Iran as a professional government. Mr. Ahmadinejad sometimes makes statements that don't make complete sense to us, but denigrating him and trying to marginalize him simply plays into his hands.

I think we ought to remove from the table some sort of significant military operation against Iran. That would be very irresponsible and not likely to offer any degree of success. We need to engage Iran and recognize that there is a significant pool of support among a lot of the people for a positive and friendly relationship with the United States. At the same time, we need to be wary of Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons, but I don't think we ought to be sounding that alarm constantly. I've seen no intelligence that indicates that it's imminent.

TAC: What is the defining issue in this campaign? Foreign policy? The economy?

The proper role of the government in the economy and the scope of government spending. I think Iraq certainly is an important issue, partly because of the tremendous cost of it—\$400 million a day is a lot of money that could be better utilized by American citizens to do the things here at home.

TAC: Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are spending a lot of time in Pennsylvania trying to find a convincing message to mostly working-class voters who find that in an increasingly global economy they can't sustain the living standard that their parents had. How do you address this issue?

I think it is important to point out to the American people that while their living standards are decreasing, the living stan-

dard of the government is increasing, and it ought to be the other way around. As long as you allow a government to keep growing, whatever tax system you have is going to feed that beast, and I think people simply need to be reminded that as these things are happening to them, the same thing is not happening to the government because the government can just keep spending their money and to whatever degree it wants.

TAC: To what do you attribute the fall of the dollar?

The imbalance in trade, the lack of market forces being used to operate and create a better balance here in this country. I am not an economist and never hope to be one, but when you have government interfering in the market and setting artificial standards, it is going to cause disruptions.

TAC: What are the mechanics of securing a Libertarian Party nomination?

Two things are important here. One is ballot access. The Libertarian Party alone among third parties has national ballot access.

Internally, it is a matter of the delegates to the Denver convention over Memorial Day weekend deciding on who the nominees for president and vice president are going to be. If I decide to become a candidate, we will be in touch with those delegates to make sure that we do have the requisite number of votes, which I am very confident we would.

TAC: Would the Libertarian Party have trouble with your views on immigration?

Some members might have trouble with my views on some other issues—drugs, the marriage issue, even though on both

Continued on page 34

Tehran Trip Wire

Iran is conducting a proxy war against the United States in Iraq, declared Amb. Ryan Crocker. How? Gen. David Petraeus explained. The Quds Force of the Iranian

Revolutionary Guard and Hezbollah are arming, training, and directing the Shia militia fighting U.S. and Iraqi forces in Basra and firing rockets into the Green Zone. Said Petraeus, the Quds Force is responsible for killing hundreds of American soldiers.

If true, these are acts of war from a privileged sanctuary. And Bush would be as justified in attacking these Iranian base camps as was Nixon in ordering U.S. forces to clean out the North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia.

While there is no reason to question the truth of what Petraeus and Crocker allege, this proxy war raises a question. What is Tehran's motive?

Iran, after all, is the principal beneficiary of the U.S. invasion that dethroned its enemy Saddam, ended the Sunni Ba'ath Party's monopoly of power, and opened the door to Shia politicians with strong ties to Tehran. The regime in the Green Zone is the same regime that rolled out a red carpet for President Ahmadinejad.

Why then would Iran bloody it up? Why, when things are going Iran's way in Iraq, would it risk war with the United States over Iraq?

The April 16 *Los Angeles Times* offers an answer. Iran's proxy war against us in Iraq may be Tehran's response to a U.S. proxy war being waged against Iran. Ahmadinejad may be exacting blood for blood.

According to *Times* writer Borzou Daragahi, Iran believes the United States is behind groups that are systematically killing Iranians along the border.

One such group is the Party for Free Life in Kurdistan, or PEJAK, which is linked to the PKK that has conducted a terrorist war in Turkey and is considered by the United States a terrorist organization. The founder of PEJAK is Osman Ocalan, brother of the founder of the PKK, who is now serving a life sentence in a Turkish prison.

As Turkey retaliates against the PKK with artillery fire and raids into Kurdistan, Iranians are now doing the same.

A second group, regarded by both the United States and Iran as terrorist, is the Mujaheddin-e Khalq, a cult-like group operating inside Iraq on the Iranian border. Iranians also believe the United States is behind attacks in the oil-rich and Arab Khuzestan region of southwest Iran.

And as Daragahi reports, "Baluch militants have killed dozens of members of Iran's security forces, including 11 elite Revolutionary Guard in a car bomb attack last year in Zahedan, a town near the border with Pakistan and Afghanistan." Jundallah, or God's Party, claimed responsibility for that attack.

Last year also, a Kurdish woman killed several Iranian officers and soldiers in a suicide bombing. According to Daragahi, "Iraqi Kurds say perceived U.S. support for PEJAK and other anti-Iranian groups prompted Iranians to reactivate Ansar al Islam, a Sunni Muslim group with ties to al-Qaida that has been launching attacks against Kurdish officials."

The danger here is that these proxy wars could explode into U.S. air attacks on the Quds Force, followed by Iranian

retaliation against U.S. troops, followed by U.S. strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities and a third U.S. war in the Middle East, dropped into the lap of an overstretched U.S. military and onto the desk of the next president.

In his speech last week, Bush warned that the regime in Tehran "has a choice to make," and if "Iran makes the wrong choice, America will act to protect our interests, and our troops and our Iraqi partners." That is to say, this is Tehran's last warning.

Query: Where is the Congress of the United States? It alone has the power to authorize or declare a war of the magnitude toward which we may be headed because of proxy wars about which the American people know next to nothing.

Up on Capitol Hill, GOP Congressman Walter Jones of North Carolina is seeking to rewrite the War Powers Act to ensure that if the United States goes to war again it be the "collective judgment" of both elected branches, as the Founding Fathers intended.

Needed now are congressional hearings to determine if President Bush has authorized a proxy war against Iran—by funding or arming guerrillas to attack the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and if that is what is behind the IRG-backed attacks on U.S. forces.

Even before such hearings, both Houses should pass a joint resolution declaring that no appropriated funds may be used for any pre-emptive American air strikes on Iran—unless and until Congress has authorized such acts of war. If we are headed for war with Iran, it should be the collective judgment of all the nation's elected leadership, and not done on the whim of a lame-duck president unsure about his place in history. ■

Gang Warfare

Criminals have found a new way to hone their combat skills: joining the U.S. military.

By Matthew A. Roberts

ON JAN. 9, 2005, Andres Raya caught police in a calculated ambush outside a liquor store in Ceres, California. He shot two officers, killing one, before the police returned fire and killed him. After the incident, detectives discovered that Raya belonged to the Norteños gang. Video from a break-in at Ceres High School showed him throwing gang signs and flashing gang graffiti, and displayed an American flag cut up to spell “F--k Bush” on the floor of the gymnasium. Lance Corporal Raya was a Marine on leave from a tour in Iraq.

Street gangs—particularly Hispanic gangs, the fastest growing in the U.S.—are making major inroads into America’s Armed Forces. Hunter Glass, a retired police detective and gang expert in Fayetteville, N.C., home to Fort Bragg and the 82nd Airborne, knows of members of Florencia 13, Latin Kings, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), Norteños, and Sureños serving in the military. A 2006 report produced by the Los Angeles Joint Drug Intelligence Group also lists the 18th Street Gang, Eastside Longos, and Vagos as having military-trained members. According to the FBI, “Members of nearly every major street gang ... have been documented on military installations both domestically and internationally.”

Glass points out, “The military is merely a reflection of the society it serves. As gangs grow in the U.S., they will grow somewhat comparatively in the military.” But recent figures indicate that gang membership in the Armed

Forced significantly surpasses civilian levels. *Stars and Stripes* reported that 1 to 2 percent of the military are gang members, compared to 0.02 percent of the general population. The proliferation of gang graffiti in Iraq and the prevalence of gang tattoos among soldiers underscores the point.

Hispanic gangs often rumble with black gangs, like the Gangster Disciples and Crips. Members of the Avenues, a Latino gang in Los Angeles, were convicted in 2006 of federal hate crimes for deliberately targeting African-Americans. An informant told the FBI that the Avenues members were under orders to kill blacks on sight in their Highland Park neighborhood.

These rivalries spill over into the military. Texans saw the problem up close after soldiers associated with the Gangster Disciples and Crips transferred from Fort Hood to Fort Bliss in El Paso, where the mestizo gang Barrio Azteca dominates. Reginald Moton, Gang Investigations Supervisor of the El Paso Police Department, recalls an incident on Feb. 20, 2005, when two black men with possible gang connections, a soldier from Fort Bliss and a former soldier recently chaptered out of the military, wrangled with members of Barrio Azteca at a nightclub. Words were exchanged and afterwards, at a nearby fast-food restaurant, the dispute “resulted with both sides of the altercation firing handguns at each other.”

So pronounced is the gang problem at Fort Hood that when 23,000 troops and

their families were slated to transfer to Fort Carlson, Colorado last year, the *Colorado Springs Independent* ran a piece warning, “In recent years, the Chicago-based Gangster Disciples have been active at Fort Hood, and alleged members have been linked to slayings, robberies and drug and gun trafficking. Police in Colorado Springs and Killeen, Texas, which is home to Fort Hood, confirm that they are sharing gang information to prepare for this relocation.”

Gang-related incidents in the military are isolated now, but law-enforcement officials worry about long-term dangers. The Los Angeles Joint Drug Intelligence Group’s report saw a twofold threat. First, gangs “infect America’s armed forces with the degeneration and violence characteristic of gangs,” and some even recruit while serving in the military. Second, gang members return to their gangs “having acquired new soldiering skills and weapons training and pose an even greater threat to civilians and law enforcement.” The report goes on to say that over 100 military-trained gang members in the Los Angeles area “present a latent danger to its residents.” If each of these gang members were to pass on his military training to just four others in LA, they would “overwhelm present law enforcement tactics.”

The tactics of military-trained gang members already overwhelm police. When Andres Raya opened fire with an SKS assault rifle, he used a military tactic known as “slicing the pie.” He was able to outmaneuver police, wounding one

officer. When backup arrived, he defended his position using “suppression fire” before killing a veteran policeman.

“[G]angs are joining the military for a reason,” notes William Gheen, president of Americans for Legal Immigration. “They have an agenda, and it is to gain access to elite weaponry and training.” In fact, many gangs go out of their way to groom prospects for military enlistment. Others benefit from having their juvenile records sealed, fail to report criminal convictions, or use fake documents.

FBI agent Andrea Simmons told the *New York Sun*, “The intelligence that we have thus far indicates that [gangs] may try to recruit young people who have clean records and encourage them to keep their record clean to get into the military. ... They would get great weapons training and other types of training and access to weapons and arms, and be able to use that knowledge.” Hunter Glass adds that although some of the finest soldiers he has known are Hispanic, “Latino gangs ... know very well what they can learn from the military and [what] will assist them in their criminal endeavors.”

Given these threats, why are gang members allowed to infiltrate the Armed Forces? Recruiters are desperate, and the bar has been lowered. “From the perspective of the military command staff, the present need for a large number of troops may outweigh the need for quality troops,” concludes the Los Angeles threat assessment. In 2005, a member of the Latin Kings was recruited by the Army while awaiting trial for attacking a police officer with a razor.

Recent Defense Department statistics indicate that the percentage of Army recruits with high-school diplomas has dropped from 94 percent in 2003 to 70.7 percent. According to the *New York Times*, the number of moral waivers offered for recruits with criminal backgrounds has grown 65 percent,

resulting in 11.7 percent with criminal histories in 2006.

Acknowledging the growing problem, the 2008 Defense Authorization Bill forbids gang membership. (Current regulations only ban membership in organizations that “espouse supremacist causes.”) Representative Mike Thompson, who introduced the amendment, commented in *Stars and Stripes*, “I’ve heard from police officers across the country that there are problems with gangs on posts.” He continued, “The FBI suggests there are problems not only in the states but bases abroad.” But such measures will probably come up short: it’s easy for soldiers to keep their gang affiliations secret.

Furthermore, most members, even if they had a way to leave their gangs, do not want out. Investigator Scott Barfield interviewed 320 soldiers who admitted gang membership, and only two said they wanted to leave. “They’re not here for the red, white and blue. They’re here for the black and gold [the gang colors of the Latin Kings],” Barfield told the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

The tribal loyalties of gangs go back to ancient times and dwell deeper in the psyche than any abstract allegiance to the state. Hunter Glass has found that “gangbanging is a way of life, and gangs act as a replacement for the natural family, so for many this is the only way they know how to act or interact. ... The military cannot stop a gang member from being a gang member anymore than it can stop a Christian from being a Christian.”

And while the government may try to weed out gang members, the problem only intensifies as demand for soldiers increases. Many see increased immigration as the solution. In the *Washington Post*, Max Boot and Michael O’Hanlon wrote that it is “time to consider a new chapter in the annals of American immigration.” We can increase military

recruitment by “inviting foreigners to join the U.S. armed forces in exchange for a promise of citizenship.” A provision in the most recent version of the DREAM Act, which failed to gain cloture last October, would have granted legal status to illegal immigrants who served two years. But young illegal alien males are particularly vulnerable to gang culture, and while most would no doubt serve honorably and welcome citizenship, others might come with conflicting loyalties.

A 2007 FBI assessment pointed out, “Most gang members have been preindoctrinated into the gang lifestyle and maintain an allegiance to their gang. This could ultimately jeopardize the safety of other military members and impede gang-affiliated soldiers’ ability to act in the best interest of the country.”

During the recent Capitol Hill hearings, General Petraeus was asked about gang activity in the military. He said that he wasn’t aware of any. Perhaps he hadn’t heard of Juwan Johnson, whose mother encouraged him to join the Army to escape the drugs and gangs back in Baltimore. The young sergeant was decorated for his Iraq service and was back in Germany, due to be discharged in two weeks. He never made it home.

Eight of Johnson’s fellow soldiers handled his brutal initiation into the Gangster Disciples. He was found dead in his barracks the next morning, killed by blunt-force trauma. Two servicemen have been convicted.

Meanwhile, Gangster Disciples graffiti—its initials and distinctive six-pointed star—continues to show up throughout Iraq. “When these cats, these gang members, come back,” Airman First Class Miguel Robinson, a Los Angeles Crip, told ABC, “we’re going to have some hell on these streets.” ■

Matthew A. Roberts writes from Kansas City, Mo.

Détente in the Taiwan Strait

Lost in the din of Tibetan riots and anti-Chinese protests calling for boycotts of the Beijing Games was the reopening of unofficial, direct negotiations between

the Chinese and Taiwanese governments. This development followed the March landslide victory of Ma Ying-jeou in Taiwan's presidential election and his Kuomintang Party's January victory in the parliamentary elections. In mid-April, the newly elected Taiwanese vice president, Vicent Siew, met Hu Jintao, China's paramount leader, to discuss future economic co-operation between the two states, pointing toward the possibility of establishing regular direct flights between China and Taiwan and a gradual normalization of relations.

Though Siew went as a private citizen, even this much of a thaw in relations is remarkable. The shift in internal Taiwanese politics and Beijing-Taipei relations that the new KMT government represents may be one of the more important changes in world politics in recent years. It also draws attention to the economic flaws and political weakness of former President Chen Shui-bian's pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party, as well as confirming the continuation of the "one China" policy espoused by Beijing, Washington, and Taipei.

The DPP never had an overwhelming mandate. It first gained power in 2000 with a plurality of the vote in a race that saw the traditional "Blue" coalition split between rival campaigns. The party won again by a narrow margin in 2004 in the wake of an assassination attempt on Chen, which many of his opponents believe was staged.

Despite Chen's initial popularity and the novelty of breaking the KMT stran-

glehold on power, during the eight years of DPP rule the government was dogged by corruption scandals and an ineffective response to the collapse of the market bubble in 2000. In the same period, China increasingly became the preferred place to do business for Western and Taiwanese companies, putting a party that was hostile to Beijing ever more at odds with the economic interests of the country. In the March election, the DPP's candidate, Frank Hsieh—perceived as the representative of a party lacking any positive agenda beyond symbolic provocations aimed at both Beijing and the KMT—was routed by 17 points.

One of the main commemorative squares in Taipei offers some hint of how obnoxious the years of DPP ascendancy seemed to a majority of Taiwanese. Traditionally named the Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall after the Chinese Nationalist leader and first president of the Republic of China in Taiwan, the square was renamed the "Taiwan National Democracy Memorial Hall" by the DPP, and the monument in which the statue of Chiang is located was festooned with political posters and propaganda for the ruling "Greens." While obviously a symbolic insult to the KMT, these moves also captured the DPP's divisive political style and its contempt for a figure who represents the part of the population that came from mainland China.

These provocations, along with moves like supporting referenda pressing for Taiwanese entry into the UN,

worsened the DPP's already weak political position and have all but guaranteed its minority status for several election cycles to come. This means that the KMT will probably be able to pursue increased economic ties to the mainland, which in turn should open up new trade agreements with a number of other neighboring countries and the United States. The depleted ranks of the KMT will offer limited resistance. Ma's economic and trade agenda holds the possibility that Taiwan, which had been increasingly isolated by Beijing's diplomacy, will become more integrated into the region in the near future.

The rise of an enduring KMT majority and the prospect of reduced tensions between China and Taiwan means that there is less chance of America being drawn into a conflict in the straits. That in turn offers the promise of U.S.-Taiwanese relations less preoccupied with building up Taiwan's military deterrence. It opens the door to a gradual disentanglement of the U.S. from an increasingly outdated Cold War security commitment.

There is no chance that the change of government portends reunification in the foreseeable future, and the political regimes of the two Chinas remain far apart ideologically. But the nationalist legacy of the KMT and the increasingly nationalist political culture of the mainland may provide the basis for a future political consensus. China's intense nationalism has unsettled its neighbors over the last two decades and encouraged Western alarmists to portray China as fascist, yet the emphasis on racial and cultural identity could prove the bridge toward peaceful reunification with Taiwan later in the century. ■

Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Forgetting Sarah Marshall*]

Apatow's Ensemble

By Steve Sailer

EVER SINCE THE COLLAPSE of the Hollywood studio system, film productions have become expensive and time-consuming to get off the ground because each new movie is an independent business enterprise demanding complex negotiations.

If Shakespeare were a film auteur today with all the public acclaim he'd deserve, so much of his time would be tied up taking meetings that he'd be lucky to get a bare dozen of his scripts ever made into movies. Hollywood insiders would gossip about Bill Shakespeare's legendary unfilmed screenplay about Falstaff; every time his people finally hammered out a deal with a funny fat guy—whether John Belushi, John Candy, or Chris Farley—the star would drop dead.

Comic screenwriter and producer Judd Apatow has been pursuing a lower cost business strategy for making movies. Apatow's model resembles a theater company in which scripts are written to fit the pre-existing talents of his ensemble. When putting together the critically acclaimed but shortlived television series "Freaks and Geeks" (about high school students) and "Undeclared" (college students), he assembled a team of funny (but rather funny-looking) young men such as Apatow's alter ego,

actor Seth Rogen. When the shows were canceled and nobody else in the business rushed to employ them, Apatow taught them to write screenplays for themselves to star in.

The first film Apatow wrote and directed, 2005's "40 Year Old Virgin" (which took in \$109 million at the domestic box office on a lean \$26 million budget), featured his team in supporting roles. Rogen finally became a star last year in Apatow's "Knocked Up" (\$149 million). Meanwhile, Rogen had outgrown the screenplay he'd co-written about high-school seniors, "Superbad," so Rogen's role was taken by his alter ego, Jonah Hill, who looks like his little brother. When it earned \$121 million in U.S. theatres, Apatow was declared a brand name.

Now another Apatow protégé, Jason Segel (Rogen's tall stoner housemate in "Knocked Up"), has penned the consistently funny and sometimes appealing romantic break-up film "Forgetting Sarah Marshall." Segel stars as a boozy, self-pitying schlub whose TV starlet girlfriend has left him for a cretinous but lasciviously charming rock star played by English comic Russell Brand in his first, and definitely not last, American role.

The cultural import of Team Apatow's popular sex comedies has been much debated among 20-somethings. Twentieth-century artists and entertainers tended to see their role as shocking the bourgeoisie, but will there eventually be any left to shock? Apatow both continues that trend, concocting new lows in raunchiness, while also preaching ever more openly his traditional values of monogamy, sobriety, and industry.

On the one hand, sounding like a Weimar era manifesto writer, Apatow recently proclaimed, "America fears the

penis, and that's something I'm going to help them get over. ... I'm gonna get a penis in every movie I do from now on." Hence, in "Forgetting Sarah Marshall," we are treated to the frontal sight of a naked Jason Segel bawling as his girlfriend, played by Kristen Bell, dumps him. (Segel recalls that when this actually occurred in his own life, as he emerged from the shower, "All I kept thinking was, 'This is the funniest thing that's ever happened to anybody. I cannot wait until she leaves so I can start writing this down.'")

On the other hand, the plot of "Sarah Marshall," like most films sponsored by Apatow, a devoted family man, offers an endorsement of bourgeois values, particularly the threat of venereal diseases spread by the promiscuous likes of Sarah's new boyfriend.

Similarly, "Sarah Marshall" is even more adamant than "Knocked Up" in pushing the diligent Apatow's crusade against marijuana. Apatow has said, "My main intention is to show that drugs lead them on the road to nowhere. ... Every guy I worked with who smokes pot is less funny, or their music got lame." Thus veteran Apatow ensemble member Paul Rudd plays a Hawaiian surfing instructor whose brain is so fried that his character is not even amusing.

Is Apatow a force for good or bad in our society? Apatow himself can't say. He admits, "I find that people don't pick up on that [anti-marijuana] message... even if I hit it really hard." More likely, the bongheads sitting on their couches watching his characters sit on their couches smoking dope conclude that their lives must also be worthy of being on DVD. ■

Rated R for sexual content, language, and some graphic nudity.

BOOKS

[*The Much Too Promised Land: America's Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace*, Aaron David Miller, Bantam, 416 pages]

Israel's Lawyers

By Michael C. Desch

OVER THE PAST 200 YEARS, a handful of American Jews has played a major role in formulating U.S. policy toward the Israel-Palestine conflict. These include Dennis Ross, who served as the Middle East envoy and chief peace negotiator for the first President Bush and President Clinton; Martin Indyk, the U.S. ambassador to Israel twice during the 1990s as well as assistant secretary of state for Near East Affairs; Robert Malley, a former National Security Council staffer in the Clinton administration; and Aaron David Miller, a long-time State Department official who advised six secretaries of state on Arab-Israeli issues. They were all present at the ill-fated Camp David negotiations in July 2000.

Since leaving public service, these men have participated in the public debates on questions such as whether the United States should favor Israel in the Middle East and who is responsible for the failure to make peace at the end of the Clinton administration.

Until now, Ross and Indyk, who work for two of the most influential pro-Israel organizations inside the Beltway—the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution—have dominated the discussion. They argue that the United States should align itself with Israel and blame the Palestinians for every failure to settle the conflict. These themes are emphasized in Ross's *The Missing Peace*. At a talk last year at the George H.W. Bush School of Government and Public Service, he advanced the counterintuitive thesis that

Washington's pro-Israel tilt actually facilitated the peace process by increasing American leverage with the Israelis and assuring Arabs that we would deliver the Jewish state when the time came.

Malley, who is the Middle East and North Africa Program Director at the International Crisis Group, first challenged this pro-Israeli view in 2001, arguing in an influential article in the *New York Review of Books* (written with Hussein Agha) that Prime Minister Ehud Barak's reportedly "generous offer" to the Palestinians at Camp David was not generous, nor even a real offer. Malley's view, which finds considerable support among scholars and European commentators, is shared by hardly any American politicians and few in the mainstream media. The mere suggestion that Malley might be a campaign adviser to Democratic hopeful Barack Obama ignited a firestorm inside the Beltway because pro-Israel activists saw it as evidence that Obama would not be "good" for Israel.

Miller joined the fray in May 2005 with a provocative op-ed in the *Washington Post*, in which he argued that "for far too long, many American officials involved in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, myself included, have acted as Israel's attorney, catering and coordinating with the Israelis at the expense of successful peace negotiations." *The Much Too Promised Land* is an extended brief on behalf of a "more active and balanced approach to Arab-Israeli peacemaking." This, in Miller's view, is the best way to achieve peace between Israel and the Palestinians, which is clearly in the U.S. national interest, since this festering sore is the source of much of the anti-Americanism that hamstringing our policies in the broader Middle East.

Miller is especially critical of Bill Clinton for being too pro-Israel and George W. Bush for standing aloof from the peace process for most of his presidency. Miller's heroes are Henry Kissinger, Jimmy Carter, and James Baker, who were not only deeply engaged in trying to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but also tried to put

a modicum of pressure on Israel to move the process forward.

It is clear that Miller is a thoughtful and reflective person wrestling with thorny and important issues. He is candid about the deep roots of the pro-Israel bias in the United States, particularly within its Jewish community. He reveals his father's thinking about the Jewish experience: "[His] view of the world was a grim one. And while he was tied deeply to America and its promise of success his Jewish identity also ran deep. For him, the dark cloud of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust were ever present." In such a worldview, it is imperative for Israel to survive and flourish.

While his upbringing definitely affected his thinking about Middle East politics and Israel in particular, Miller nevertheless realized that it "was a narrow view of the region, seen from a highly skewed perspective." Regarding Israel, he writes, "I had never been all that comfortable with the insular and exclusive Jewish vantage points of much of the Jewish community and of my parents." He contrasts his views with those of his former colleague Ross, who had "an inherent tendency to see the world of Arab-Israeli politics first from Israel's vantage point rather than that of the Palestinians." During the first Bush administration, Ross's pro-Israel leanings were kept in check by Secretary of State Baker, as Baker himself told me last year. In the Clinton administration, however, there was no senior figure acting as a counterweight to Ross and Indyk.

Displaying an uncommon sensitivity to the Palestinian perspective on Ehud Barak's "historic offer" at Camp David of more than 90 percent of the West Bank and Gaza for a Palestinian homeland, Miller reminds us that from the Arab perspective, they were asked to concede 78 percent of historic Palestine and settle for less than 22 percent. In other words, Arafat and the Palestinians were not quibbling over a few extra square miles of territory without having made substantial concessions themselves, as the Israel lobby often claims.

Miller assigns blame all around for the collapse of the Oslo peace process in 2000. In his view, Barak, as well as Arafat, “bears responsibility for what happened at Camp David.” He also blames President Clinton for the failure to reach an agreement at Camp David and bring the peace process to a fruitful conclusion. Clinton “convened Camp David with the best of intentions,” yet he and his lieutenants ultimately failed because they consistently favored Israel rather than trying to act as even-handed brokers. “If you wanted to succeed in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, you must be an advocate for both sides,” he writes. Instead, America embraced “Israeli needs and requirements as the standard by which to judge what we could live with.” Miller accuses the American delegation of simply following Barak’s lead and blaming Arafat for the collapse of Camp David—an “immature and counterproductive” approach.

The author does not spare himself either. Nor should he, for Miller and others on the Clinton team too often acted as “Israel’s lawyers.” The president and his advisers were ultimately unwilling, in Clinton’s words, to “jam” Israel.

The book’s most important point is that America’s one-sided support for Israel is not in our national interest. As Miller puts it, “our uncritical identification with some of Israel’s policies or our inattention to the Arab-Israeli issue has the power to erode our influence and interests even more in a critically important part of the world.” Of course, America’s failure is not in Israel’s interest either, and thankfully the downside of our special relationship with Israel has become increasingly obvious to the U.S. foreign policy community. Hopefully, this book will contribute to this important and encouraging development.

I was bothered by one aspect of *The Much Too Promised Land*, which suggests that an open and balanced discussion of Israel and the U.S.-Israeli relationship remains some way off. Miller dismisses the widely discussed work of John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt on the Israel lobby, asserting that “no conspiracy exists.” But Mearsheimer and

Walt emphasized repeatedly in their work that the lobby is neither a conspiracy nor a cabal. Rather, it is instead a powerful interest group like the National Rifle Association or the farm lobby.

Miller contends that America’s one-sided relationship with Israel is the result of common values (democracy) and common threats (terrorism). Elsewhere, though, he admits that “no ethnic group ... has the power and focus of the American-Jewish community.” The result, as Miller says twice in his book, is that “today you cannot be successful in American politics and not be good on Israel.” This argument is hardly different from Mearsheimer and Walt’s claim that the Israel lobby succeeds by making the pro-Israel position the “smart choice” for American politicians.

This attempt to separate himself as much as possible from Mearsheimer and Walt, combined with Miller’s contradictory comments about the role of the Israel lobby, suggests that he is uncomfortable with the fact that his arguments are similar to those put forth by the two professors, who have been vilified in the American Jewish community. His criticism of them seems like an effort to protect himself from the withering fire of the likes of Alan Dershowitz and Abraham Foxman. This ignores the very real contribution that Mearsheimer and Walt have made in opening space for the kind of balanced analysis that Miller himself puts forward. One would expect at least a grudging admission of their role in fostering a more even public discourse about the Israel and the United States.

This flaw notwithstanding, *The Much Too Promised Land* is likely to reinforce the growing belief that the United States should end the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians as quickly as possible, and that requires Washington to push Israel to allow a viable Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank. ■

Michael C. Desch is Professor and Robert M. Gates Chair in Intelligence and National Security Decision-making at the George Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

[*Ain’t My America: The Long, Noble History of Anti-War Conservatism and Middle-American Anti-Imperialism*, Bill Kauffman, Metropolitan, 274 pages]

Fewer Bases, More Baseball

By Daniel McCarthy

BILL KAUFFMAN writes prose—history, novels, journalism—but he is a poet and a prophet. His task in *Ain’t My America* is to remind us of who we are: a Republic, not an empire, a nation of families and towns, not barracks and bases. Kauffman writes to restore conservatives to their senses. No more war, please. Remember your ancestors. Remember Jefferson and John Quincy Adams, Russell Kirk and Robert Nisbet. What has passed for the Right since the Cold War isn’t right in any sense, and Kauffman sets out to prove it.

Antiwar, “Little America” conservatism was present at the creation of the Republic. Revolutionaries like Patrick Henry, having thrown off the yoke of British empire, were not about to set up a centralized fiscal-military state in the former colonies. “I abominate and detest the idea of government, where there is a standing army,” George Mason told Virginia’s ratifying convention.

Unfortunately, Anti-Federalists like Mason and Henry set the practical as well as philosophical precedent for future conservatives—they failed. A stronger central government with heightened war-making powers, sufficient to put down Whiskey rebels—tax rebels, actually—and Daniel Shays, took root. Even so, the victorious Federalists were no imperialists. On the contrary, they opposed Thomas Jefferson’s designs to build an inland “Empire of Liberty” with the Louisiana Purchase. “As you extend your limits you increase the difficulties arising from a want of that similarity of customs, habits, and manners so essential for its support,” warned Connecticut Federalist Roger

Griswold. Neighbors might be friends; strangers had to be unified by laws.

Neither Federalists nor Jeffersonian Republicans were consistently antiwar. The former raised a navy, and taxes, under John Adams to fight a Quasi-War with France. Republicans invaded Canada and kicked off the War of 1812. The most implacable opponent of that conflict—a foe of almost all militarism and expansion, in fact—was John Randolph of Roanoke, a Republican himself, as well as “a habitual opium user, a bachelor who seems to have nurtured a crush on Andrew Jackson,” Kauffman tells us, and an exemplary American conservative. The history of Randolph and his fellow dissident Republicans, the Tertium Quids, is samizdat in George Bush’s America. “Today, most of those old battles are forgotten,” neocon Robert Kagan assures us, “No one recalls that John Randolph of Roanoke and John Taylor of Caroline—more Jeffersonian than Jefferson himself—railed against the War of 1812.” Not so, Bob. Bill Kauffman remembers, and he won’t let America forget.

Partisans of peace in the Old Republic included poets as well as statesmen. Kauffman not only writes with literary flair of his own, he quotes generously from antiwar poets and songwriters. “Once upon a time in America,” he says, “poets engaged in public discourse and sought consulates instead of endowed chairs.” William Cullen Bryant abominated the War of 1812; Emerson and John Greenleaf Whittier took their stands against the Mexican War.

The Little America tradition remained strong, if at all turns unsuccessful, through the Spanish-American War, the opposition to which, most notably the Anti-Imperialist League, was filled with classical liberals like Yale sociologist William Graham Sumner and was funded by (mostly) small businessmen—a conservative coalition. “They spoke for ... a land of creeks, not oceans; shops, not factories; modesty and sly humor, not bluster and brass,” Kauffman writes. And this was no mere protest movement: prominent politicians like Democratic ex-president Grover Cleveland and such

stalwart Republicans as Senators Justin Morrill of Vermont—a founder of the Grand Old Party, no less—and George Frisbie Hoar of Massachusetts supported the cause.

Resistance to U.S. entry into World War I arose from many of the same segments of society that had stood against the Spanish-American War. “The opposition to the war came mostly from farmers, old-school classical liberals, pacifists, Main Street Republican isolationists, and socialists,” Kauffman relates. But this time, “The balance tilted leftward”:

The Left distinguished itself in 1917, while the Right, as it would in future conflicts, threw in with a liberal war president. That it took Socialists to circulate a pamphlet with the libertarian title *No Conscription, No Involuntary Servitude, No Slavery is an indictment of the individualistic Right*.

The ranks of old-guard Republicans like Morrill and Hoar had thinned by 1917, leaving right-wing antiwar sentiment to be expressed by such unsavory figures as Mississippi arch-segregationist Sen. James Vardaman. He damned Wilson’s interventionism and denounced “the un-American principle of compulsory military training.” That cost him his Senate seat—an equally segregationist hawk replaced him.

After Woodrow Wilson’s misadventure, opposition to further bleeding America for Europe multiplied. The anti-interventionists of the interwar years had a sense of humor: satirical Veterans of Future Wars chapters sprang up on 584 college campuses, along with local variations such as the Future Profiteers and Future Goldiggers. These young doves were also budget hawks; according to Kauffman, they believed “a policy of preemptive fiscal conservatism would stop war before it started.”

As World War II approached, the America First Committee assembled. It was the largest antiwar organization in U.S. history—and is perhaps the most maligned. Drawing on the work of historians Wayne Cole and Justus Doenecke,

Kauffman sets the record straight: America First was not anti-Semitic or pro-German. A single unvetted speech by Charles Lindbergh asserted that “the three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt administration.” Lindbergh had his defenders, a young Kurt Vonnegut among them, but leaders of America First like John T. Flynn, the anti-New Deal journalist who was head of the New York chapter, were aghast. Kauffman argues that this anomalous speech should not besmirch the organization: Lindbergh “was one man in the last broad peace movement in American history, almost a million strong.”

Even during the Cold War, when an interventionist anti-Communism largely defined the Right, antiwar conservatives persevered. Felix Morley, co-founder of *Human Events*, was one of them. Others included traditionalist conservatives Russell Kirk and Robert Nisbet, who made little attempt to conceal their thoughts about what militarism meant for the nation’s social order. “Nothing has proved more destructive of kinship, religion, and local patriotism,” wrote Nisbet, “than has war and the accompanying military mind.”

In Congress, there was Sen. Robert A. Taft—known as “Mr. Republican,” though he narrowly lost the party’s presidential nomination in 1952—and Taft’s even more anti-interventionist ’52 campaign manager, Nebraska Congressman Howard Buffett, father of Warren and an uncompromising foe of war and government growth (or do I repeat myself?). There was also Congressman H.R. Gross (R-Ind.), noted in his *New York Times* obituary for his “tight-fisted approach to fiscal matters and his strong isolationist views on foreign policy.” Gross “railed against the space program, foreign aid, congressional junkets abroad, and every post office and bridge he could find,” says Kauffman. And Kentucky Republican Eugene Siler, a devout Baptist, cast the sole “no” vote in the House against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. (Gross voted “present.”)

Taft died in 1953, Buffet in 1964. Siler retired in '65, and Gross stepped down a decade later. A new crop of antiwar Republicans succeeded them—Oregon Sen. Mark Hatfield, Illinois Sen. Charles Percy, Kentucky Sens. John Sherman Cooper and Thruston B. Morton. But the real spiritual successors to the Old Right, Kauffman argues, were on the other side of the political spectrum: “The words of Buffett, of Morley, of Taft, could be discerned in the tunes of the New Left.” Not coincidentally, the only antiwar candidate to win the nomination of either major party during the Cold War was a man of the Left, South Dakota Sen. George McGovern.

Then again, Kauffman suggests, this “soft-spoken man of the prairies” may have been “the most conservative of the serious presidential aspirants” of the era, “after Bob Taft and Eugene McCarthy.” Kauffman is a persuasive McGovern revisionist, and old George’s recent *Wall Street Journal* op-ed “Freedom Means Responsibility” certainly struck a libertarian chord: “under the guise of protecting us from ourselves,” he wrote, “the right and the left are becoming ever more aggressive in regulating behavior.” Acid, amnesty, and abortion? Or antiwar, anti-centralist, and authentically American?

The end of the Cold War should have been the end of the imperial Right. But it wasn’t. Instead things got worse instead of better under two Bushes and two terms of Clinton. Today, writes Kauffman,

The Republicans in the age of George W. Bush have become a war party, nothing less and certainly nothing more. Dissident GOP voices are rare and unwelcome echoes. Among the Democrats, it is the most culturally conservative national figures (Senators Robert Byrd of West Virginia and James Webb of Virginia) who have the guts and convictions to take on the Bush policy of hyperinterventionism.

Eleven House Republicans voted against Gulf War 2: The Phantom

Menace. Only two of them are still in office—though, thankfully, they are the two most conservative: Ron Paul of Texas and Jimmy Duncan of Tennessee. They have since been joined in dissent by North Carolina’s Walter Jones, who has owned up to making a mistake in voting for the war. These three almost seem the last of their breed. “Together, the Christian Right and the neoconservatives dedicated the GOP—exiled from Main Street—to war and empire” Kauffman laments. “Iraq II was only the beginning—or so they prayed.”

The antiwar Right is used to losing: we have about 200 years’ experience in that line. The marvel is that we have survived at all against the most efficient killing machine ever invented—the modern state. Failure has had a steep price, but the cost of not resisting would have been even greater. Kauffman’s last chapter shows what war has done to our families, our towns, our culture—even our night skies, as war-perverts dream of planting missiles on the moon. “The social costs, in forms ranging from the nationalization of child care to booming divorce rates are monuments to the hypocrisy of conservatives,” Kauffman writes. That some of the most trenchant conservative critics of militarism have been sociologists—William Graham Sumner, Robert Nisbet, Allan Carlson—is no accident. Taxes, divorce, juvenile delinquency, anomie, and rootlessness are just a few of the wages of war. “No agency of the government has done as much to destroy the traditional American family as has the Department of Defense,” Kauffman concludes.

Like our once-federated Republic, we’ve been folded, spindled, and mutilated, but the antiwar Right is not giving up. The cause of Little America—of Batavia, New York and Sedalia, Missouri, and everywhere dear to a native son’s heart—is too great to surrender. *Ain’t My America* is a book every conservative, and certainly every *TAC* reader, should own—and give to friends. For Bill Kauffman reminds us that we have a long and joyous tradition to live up to. ■

[*Souled Out: Reclaiming Faith and Politics After the Religious Right*, E.J. Dionne Jr; Princeton University Press, 265 pages]

Left-wing and a Prayer

By Darryl Hart

WHEN CONSERVATIVES embraced family values and religion during the early days of the Reagan coalition, they hardly envisaged that the day would come when faith-based politics would become as much a Democratic as a Republican concern.

For a long time, the Right almost monopolized the argument that faith cannot be cordoned off from the public sphere without harming the health of the nation. This proved an effective response to the emerging liberal secular order of American politics imposed through the courts in the 1960s and 1970s, when judges did not hesitate to issue rulings about the propriety of Bible reading and prayer in public schools, the ethics of human reproduction, and the practice of religion in government-related spaces.

These reforms, however, were never given democratic sanction by the legislature. In effect they polarized the advocates of family values against those who regarded such values as oppressive. The progressives, in championing personal liberty, overreached and invited a counterpunch from the Religious Right.

In the 1980s and 1990s, conservatives largely assumed that the Christian churches were on their side—a plausible enough presumption, given the manner in which liberalism had become associated with secular culture.

Yet there is nothing intrinsically conservative about Christianity. The Bible, for instance, and more specifically the New Testament, is not any more on the side of balanced budgets, limited government, and the electoral college than it is in favor of demilitarization, food

stamps, and universal health care. Indeed, Scripture often seems to correspond more accurately with a Left-leaning worldview.

Today this Left aisle of America's ideological church has begun to find its voice. In reality, it had never been entirely silent. America's Roman Catholic bishops have often aligned themselves with liberal politics, while the evangelicals have produced any number of progressive spokesmen, from Tony Campolo to Jim Wallis.

Recently there has been a flurry of books and articles heralding the decline or death of the Religious Right, written from the perspective of the religious center or Left. From the Catholic side comes E.J. Dionne, the veteran journalist and *Washington Post* columnist. He has been joined by figures as diverse as Rick Warren, the Hawaiian-shirt wearing Baptist minister; Randall Balmer, a Columbia University religious historian; and Richard Cizik, vice president for governmental affairs of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Souled Out is a good read. Dionne is a gifted writer who knows a lot about religion and electoral politics in America. He offers astute observations that would escape most churchgoers and citizens, and does not hesitate to debunk widely held assumptions about the culture war.

Foremost among these is the notion that devout voters have supported the Republican Party in recent presidential elections. True, in 2004, Americans who attended religious services more than once a week voted for George W. Bush over John Kerry by a margin of 64 to 35 percent. Dionne convincingly argues, however, that below such surface statistics, the reality of the role of religion in American elections is much more complex. For instance, wholly convinced believers and disbelievers account for just over 30 percent of voters. Only 16 percent of Americans attend religious services more than once a week, and only 15 percent never go to church. In between is a wide swath of citizens for whom religion is one factor among

many others. Dionne also explains how race, class, wealth, and region affect voting patterns at least as much as religion. The media's focus on "moral values" voters has distracted analysts from other salient factors.

Discussions of religion and politics in America are usually restricted to the activities of born-again Protestants. Yet Roman Catholics make up almost a quarter of the population, only a couple of percentage points behind evangelicals (an unwieldy, complex group that defies precise identification). Dionne, a Catholic from the liberal fold, offers a different perspective, especially in two illuminating chapters on the background and dynamics of American Catholicism. He explores the ongoing mystery of the Catholic vote, pointing out, intriguingly, that the historic alliance between Democrats and Catholics has been stronger in the public's imagination than at the ballot. In 1960, John F. Kennedy won 80 percent of Catholic votes, yet four years earlier, Dwight D. Eisenhower had carried roughly half. "Catholics may be the most maddening electoral group in American politics," says Republican consultant Steve Wagner. Political scientist David Leege adds, "Despite a cottage industry of scholars who have studied religion and politics among American Catholics, a single theory that

Catholics who wish that Rome would change its stance on the role of women, among other issues. He also explains how Catholic social teaching influenced FDR's policies during the New Deal. For Dionne, helping liberals to build a more just and less hierarchical society is in line with the traditions of American Catholicism.

This contention forces him to account for the conservatism of the papacy, particularly under John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Here, he makes the head-scratching observation that over the last 30 years these popes have been good for society but bad for the Church. In the spirit of Vatican II, he claims that John Paul II and Benedict have sided with religious tolerance, democracy, human rights, and rendered astute judgments about modern economic developments. Yet while engaging with the world, these popes have circled the ecclesiastical wagons, insisting on strictness in doctrine, closing off debate about women priests, centralizing further the authority of Rome, and cracking down on dissent. Dionne hopes that American Roman Catholics can lead "a revival of its commitment to a public theology of the seamless garment—an emphasis on community and equality, liberty, justice, and life, all rooted in an insistence upon the imperatives of personal, social, and political responsibility."

THE HISTORIC ALLIANCE BETWEEN DEMOCRATS AND CATHOLICS HAS BEEN STRONGER IN THE PUBLIC'S IMAGINATION THAN AT THE BALLOT.

explains the dynamics of Catholic political behavior has eluded their grasp." Weighing the evidence, Dionne suggests, "It can ... be said that there is no Catholic vote—and that the Catholic vote is important."

Dionne admits, "the public voice of Catholicism is decidedly more conservative than it was in the New Deal or civil rights eras." Yet he is quick to stress that modern Catholicism should not be pigeonholed as socially conservative. He points to the large number American

Dionne is at his best when detecting the pulse of the debate over religion and politics. He asserts that America is beginning a third phase of discussion about religion's role in the public sphere. The first ran from the nation's founding through the election of JFK. During that period, Protestants dominated public life, and Roman Catholics seeking office needed to court Protestant approval. The second stage, during the 1960s and 1970s, saw Protestants lose their hegemony as the courts and political parties

nurtured a culture that segregated religion from politics.

Dionne believes we are now almost a quarter of a century into a third stage, in which religious activism has become prominent, acceptable, and successful. While acknowledging the achievements of the Religious Right, he shows that the faithful find as many outlets in liberal causes as in conservative ones.

Yet his argument is not without defects. His understanding of the vital role of religion in public life does not pay sufficient attention to the political element, either on the Left or the Right. *Souled Out* never attempts to define liberalism or conservatism with regard to the U.S. Constitution, republicanism, federalism, free trade, national defense, localism, or even education. It appears that the Religious Left and the Religious Right presume to offer religious counsel to the United States without addressing the constraints of politics in America.

While Dionne is not shy about insisting on the importance of religion in public life, he offers little in the way of specifics about what Christianity demands in the formation of a legitimate and God-honoring nation-state. Just as Americans assume the meaning of liberal and conservative without spending much time examining the history of politics, so the current celebration of religion in public life has no reference to the policies of King David or to the implications of the Sermon on the Mount for low-income housing or to the reform of the courts that might be suggested by the apocalyptic visions in the Book of Revelations.

To be sure, Dionne's book provides plenty of information about the development of religious activism in politics. It fails, though, to clarify the confused relationship between strands of political theory and concrete Christian theology. ■

Darryl Hart is Director for Partnered Projects at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and the author of A Secular Faith: Why Christianity Favors the Separation of Church and State.

Barr

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of those issues, I hold a strong federalism position, which is to me very consistent with the Libertarian philosophy.

On the issue of immigration, my focus is consistent with the platform, and that is securing the border. I am not talking about physical securing. I don't favor a fence. If there is economic opportunity, people should be free to come into this country and participate in the market...

TAC: Does that mean you favor a guestworker program?

Yes. I think people ought to be able to come in and compete for jobs as long as they submit to an immigration procedure that ensures they do not pose a security or health risk. Internally, let the market dictate if there is a place for folks.

It is important to start removing the government-program incentives that bring people here. The market ought to be the incentive, not welfare programs.

TAC: Assuming that you do get into the race and things don't turn out for the best, what would you say your campaign will achieve, even if it falls short of the presidency?

I would hope to clarify for the American people that they do not have to allow themselves to be held captive to the two-party system. I would also hope to strengthen the ability of the Libertarian Party to be a permanent, viable force in American politics.

TAC: What do you have going for you that recent third-party efforts like Buchanan's or Nader's didn't?

One, I think, is the timing. The Bush administration has made very clear to the American people the political corruption of the process. That has soured people, perhaps as never before, with regard to the establishment.

I also think it helps that so many young people are becoming involved politically. We see this in Senator Obama's campaign. We saw it when Ron Paul was an active Republican candidate. That is something that has not prevailed in earlier efforts.

I think in terms of my personal attributes that having served as an official with the CIA, as a federal prosecutor, and as a member of Congress brings a significant amount of credibility.

Also, neither of those candidates ran on the Libertarian Party ticket, and national ballot access offers a leg up in making a credible run for the presidency.

TAC: When are you going to make an announcement?

Very shortly—well in advance of the convention.

TAC: What kind of response have you gotten since announcing the formation of your exploratory committee?

I would like to tell you that everything we have heard is positive, and while most of it is, people are concerned that I'd be taking votes away from McCain. They say, "Even if McCain doesn't do anything else, he will give us conservative judges."

I think people really need to focus on what McCain stands for and what he would be looking for in a judge. The centerpiece of Senator McCain's domestic policy can be wrapped up in two words, "McCain-Feingold." I don't think anybody should believe that a President McCain would nominate a judge who does not support that philosophy. That is not conservative, by any stretch of the imagination.

If we had simply gone along over the years only supporting those candidates that the Republican establishment wanted, we never would have had Ronald Reagan. So the bottom line, particularly for conservatives, is: when was standing up and doing the right thing for the right reason not an appropriate political step? ■

Liberty's Last Dance

OK, so this Baby Boomer has grown less libertarian, and more conservative in his old age. But I could still change. Three things in particular are giving me pause.

First, there's the sudden decline and fall of Eliot Spitzer, the former governor of New York. I am enough of a libertarian to think that prostitution should be legal in a few places—and enough of a conservative to think it should be illegal in most places, including Washington D.C. So no sympathy for Spitzer from me.

Yet unfortunately, a government powerful enough to supervise virtue is also powerful enough to indulge its own particular vices. Consider: If the federal government can catch Spitzer because he moved around \$80,000 in cash—not much, in a \$14-trillion-a-year economy—then the netting of Uncle Sam's financial dragnet has become, indeed, a tight mesh.

And as a further wrinkle, search engines are now enabling everybody to look up anybody and thereby link, in cybernetic eternity, Spitzer and, say, his temporary girlfriend, Ashley Alexandra Dupre. Indeed, it's hard to imagine that E.M. Forster felt it necessary to tell us to get connected; that's all we are now—connected.

None of us are islands anymore. There's no need to send to know because we already know—or at least the Feds know.

A second spur to neo-libertarianism is the growing power of the homeland securitizers, post-9/11. The Patriot Act never bothered me, and I support building a wall on the southern border. And if we have a national ID card, that's good; it will cut down on vote fraud. Besides, what with surveillance cams and credit cards, I have no doubt They know where I am all the time anyway. But let's remember,

things can get worse because power in the name of security soon metastasizes into power as a threat to liberty.

Thus a recent incident in Washington D.C. is a disturbing indicator. On April 12, the eve of Thomas Jefferson's 265th birthday, a group of 20 or so libertarians gathered for an iPod-based silent “dance in” at the Jefferson Memorial. There's no curfew in the area; plenty of other tourists were there, too. Yet one of the “flash-mobbers,” a 20-something female, was arrested by the National Park Service police for disorderly conduct, and the other dancing liberty-lovers were shooed away.

One needn't pity this young woman too much; she will have lots of publicity and plenty of lawyers. Her nonviolent conduct that night, and seemingly unreasonable arrest, are all visible on YouTube, and she will no doubt get the smartest constitutional lawyer that the Cato Institute can cough up. Still, it's no fun to be arrested, and if the cops can confuse a high-spirited young woman out for a lark, with, say, al-Qaeda, then maybe they need to learn profiling after all.

A third reason for re-reading Ayn Rand is a new report on the costs of global warming, issued by the Congressional Budget Office. The study finds that S. 2191, the Lieberman-Warner “cap and trade” global-warming bill, will cost \$1.2 trillion over 10 years.

Of course, few observers think this legislation will actually do much of anything to reduce greenhouse gases around the world. The green argument is more long term and complicated than

that—as wishful political thinking always is. Yet the greens say that if the U.S. goes first in reductions, then other countries will be inspired by our example and go second. That is, the Chinese, for instance, will take time out from importing our factories, and beating up Tibetan monks, to follow our lead.

Now where have we seen this sort of thinking before? The idea is to propitiate some abstract deity with a costly offering, burnt or otherwise, and then, miraculously, we are rewarded with better weather. Peter Berger's 1974 book, *Pyramids of Sacrifice*, identified a continuity between the self-abnegation of ancient barbaric rituals and the pathetic confessions characterizing *Darkness at Noon*-style dictatorships. And the same mumbo-jumbo propitiatory thinking animates our politics today. We sacrifice our wealth and economic freedom on the altar of an abstraction—Presto! The righteous are rewarded.

So will conservatives join libertarians in opposition to such foolishness? One would hope so, but it's worth remembering that the Lieberman-Warner bill was once the McCain-Lieberman bill. Senator McCain de-emphasized his greenness to win the Republican nomination, but what would President McCain do? Might he feel the need to make nice with the Left so he can continue to make war in the Middle East? In reality, there's no need to ask the question, since he has already said he would do just that.

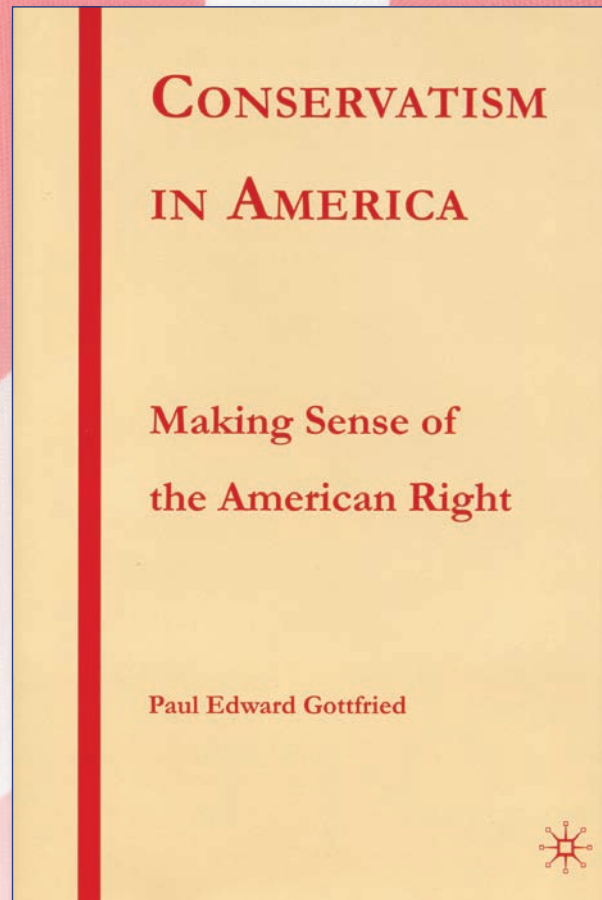
If conservatives put loyalty to their conservative president ahead of their defense of the U.S. economy and American sovereignty, then 200-proof libertarianism will start to look good. Although one should always keep, of course, the conservative's sober and instinctive pessimism. ■

“A must read for students of American conservatism.”

—Peter Brimelow, Editor, VDARE.COM

“Paul Gottfried... poses the painful questions that others flee from and offers interpretations that compel close attention from all who wish to understand the prospects for a conservative movement.”

—Eugene D. Genovese, author of
The Southern Tradition: The Achievement and Limitations of an American Conservatism



In this important book, Paul Edward Gottfried gives a fascinating account of the American conservative movement, arguing that it has been largely an invention of journalists and Republican activists. He shows how the movement has exaggerated the permanence of its values, and how both its instilled anti-Communism and its rejection of dissent have sapped its capacity for internal debate. Movement conservatives, who work disproportionately for Beltway publications and policy institutes, do not have a real social base. Their movement came to power partly by burying an older, anti-welfare state Right that had in fact enjoyed a social following concentrated in small town America. The newcomers played down the merits of those they had replaced and in the 1980's the neoconservatives, who took over the postwar conservative movement from an earlier generation, belittled their predecessors in a similar way. Among the movement's major accomplishments has been a recreation of its own past. The success of this revised history lies in the fact that even the movement's critics are now inclined to accept it.

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